

Tragedy In Tennessee



2 Children, Adult Killed In US School Bus Crash

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Authorities work the scene of an accident involving two school buses in Knoxville, Tenn., Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2014. Two buses bringing children home from school collided on a Tennessee highway Tuesday afternoon, killing two students and an adult and injuring another 23 people.

(AP Photo/Knoxville News Sentinel, Michael Patrick)



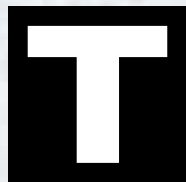
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House may vote to undo Obama's immigration order

ERICA WERNER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Republican-led U.S. House of Representatives may vote this week to undo President Barack Obama's executive actions on immigration, its leader told lawmakers Tuesday as he sought to give outraged conservatives an outlet to vent over Obama's move without shutting down the government.

The move would be mostly symbolic, since Obama would certainly veto such legislation and the Democratic-led Senate likely wouldn't go along with it. But Republican leaders hope it will assuage party members furious about Obama's two-week-old actions to shield some 4 million immigrants in the U.S. illegally from deportation, and grant them work permits.

"We're looking at a number of options in terms of how to address this. This is a serious breach of our Constitution," House Speaker John Boehner told reporters. "It's a serious threat to our system of government, and frankly we have limited options and limited ability to deal with it directly." Obama's plan came on the heels of the November elections in which Republicans retook control of the Senate and increased their majority in the House.

Conservatives have been agitating to use any government funding bill to block Obama's moves, but Republican Party leaders fear that could result in a veto by Obama and a subsequent government shutdown, a scenario they are determined to avoid. Instead some lawmakers are pushing a different approach: a full-year spending bill for most gov-



House Speaker John Boehner of Ohio returns to his office on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2014, following a House Republican caucus meeting. Just days before government funding expires, House Republican leaders are trying to strike a balance between the conservatives determined to stop President Barack Obama's immigration order and other lawmakers just as determined to avoid another politically damaging shutdown.

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

ernment agencies, combined with a shorter-term measure for departments that deal with immigration. Republicans are eager to show they can govern responsibly without risking government shutdowns. Publicly Boehner told re-

porters Republicans were considering several options and no decision had been made, but aides and lawmakers said that he indicated during a closed-door meeting with the rank and file earlier that the vote on legislation to block Obama

was the leading option. It would be on a bill by Rep. Ted Yoho, a Republican, aimed at blocking Obama from unilaterally allowing categories of unlawful immigrants to live and work here.

Boehner announced the

strategy as Congress reconvened after a week-long holiday recess. It remained uncertain whether immigration hard-liners who have scuttled past efforts by Boehner to address this issue would be satisfied with the approach.

Some outside conservatives were quick to register opposition, arguing that the approach would do nothing to stop Obama's plans stripping away the money to carry out the policy.

"If conservative members agree to this plan, they are just as complicit in Obama's amnesty as everyone else. Don't be fooled, once this budget bill passes the amnesty will be irrevocable," wrote Daniel Horowitz, a columnist for the Conservative Review.

Meanwhile Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson defended Obama's new immigration plans before a House committee where Republicans took turns denouncing them as an unconstitutional power grab that would incite a new rush of illegal immigration at the border. □

Eyeing 2016, Jeb Bush talks foreign policy

MICHAEL J. MISHAK
Associated Press
CORAL GABLES, Florida (AP)

— Nearing a decision on a presidential run in 2016, Jeb Bush on Tuesday reaffirmed his support for the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba and pushed for a foreign policy that he said could help repair U.S. credibility after Barack Obama's presidency.

"Our allies don't trust us and our enemies don't fear us. There is no situation worse for stability and peace

than that," the former Florida governor, a Republican, told the annual luncheon of the U.S.-Cuba Democracy political action committee. "The iron rule of superpower deterrent is 'Mean it when you say it.' And it has been broken by this president."

As an example, Bush cited Obama's decision not to follow through on his statements that there would be consequences for Syria if that country used chemical weapons. To date, the U.S.

has not taken any direct military action against the government of President Bashar Assad.

"Words matter," Bush said. "Presidents need to set United States aspirations and intentions where there is little gap between words and deeds."

On Monday, Bush told business leaders in Washington that he would decide "in short order" whether to launch a presidential bid. Establishment Republicans and big-money donors

see a pragmatic governor who won two terms in the nation's largest swing state in part by appealing to Florida's fast-growing Hispanic population. Conservatives see Bush, the son and brother of presidents, as too moderate on immigration and other issues important to them.

Bush aimed to burnish his foreign policy credentials Tuesday while also solidifying his connection to Florida's powerful Cuban exile community. □

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2 children, adult killed in US school bus crash



Authorities work the scene of an accident involving two school buses in Knoxville, Tenn., Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2014. Two buses bringing children home from school collided on a Tennessee highway Tuesday afternoon, killing two students and an adult and injuring another 23 people.

(AP Photo/Knoxville News Sentinel, Michael Patrick)

STEVE MEGARGEE
Associated Press
KNOXVILLE, Tennessee

(AP) — Two buses bringing children home from school collided on a Tennessee highway Tuesday afternoon, killing two students and an adult and injuring another 23 people.

Police did not immediately say what caused the crash that sent one of the buses onto its side. The children killed were around the age of eight, said Police Chief David Rausch. The adult who died was an aide.

Three seriously injured people were taken to the University of Tennessee Medical Center and were in stable condition, Rausch said. East Tennessee Children's Hospital spokeswoman Erica Estep said another 20 children were being treated there for injuries that were not life-threatening.

Rausch said 18 of the 20 had been on a bus going home from Sunnyview Primary School, whose students are between the ages of five and seven. He described their injuries as "bumps and scrapes." They were taken to the hospital on a city bus "to be checked out," he said. The other bus involved in the crash was from Chilhowee Intermediate School, whose students are between the ages of eight and 10. Rausch said some children from that bus were taken by their families to the children's hospital. Knox County Schools Superintendent Dr. Jim McIntyre fought back tears at a news conference, saying, "This is an unspeakable tragedy. This is what we work every day to try to prevent." □

Electricity fully restored in Detroit after outage

JEFF KAROUB
Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Detroit officials say power has been fully restored to government buildings, schools and other facilities after a major cable failure caused parts of the city to go dark. The city announced at 5:15 p.m. Tuesday that all customers affected by the outage had their power back.

Mayor Mike Duggan says the power grid hasn't been modernized in decades in

Detroit, which is emerging from the largest municipal bankruptcy in U.S. history. DTE Energy Co. is taking over the department and upgrading the system. The outages prompted Detroit Public Schools and Wayne State University to dismiss students early. Service was suspended by the Detroit People Mover, an elevated rail line looping downtown. It was again available for fans coming to Tuesday night's Detroit Red Wings hockey game at Joe Louis Arena. □

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Cyber Monday sales jump 17 percent to over \$2B

MAE ANDERSON

AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Online shoppers set a set a single-day spending record on Cyber Monday, despite deals being stretched out this holiday season.

Online sales Monday jumped 17 percent from last year, totaling nearly \$2.04 billion, research firm comScore Inc. said Tuesday. That represents the heaviest online spending day in history and the first to surpass \$2 billion in sales, said the firm, which tracks online sales.

Retailers from Target to Amazon have been offering online deals since the beginning of November, and are promising "cyber" deals all week.

Some anticipated the extended period would hurt Cyber Monday sales. And the lackluster start to the holiday shopping season in brick-and-mortar stores also lowered expectations. But shoppers appeared to be eager to go online.

The weekend after Thanksgiving was popular for online shopping too, with sales up 26 percent compared to the same weekend last year. The two-day period raked in \$2.01 billion in online sales, according to comScore.

"Any notion that Cyber Monday is declining in importance is really unfounded, as it continues to post new historical highs and reflects the ongoing strength of online this holiday season," comScore Chairman Emeritus Gian Fulgoni said. This may be part of a larger shift toward online buying as mobile phones spur the practice known as "showrooming," Fulgoni said in a statement. The term describes the practice of a consumer going into stores to see an item but then buying it, or a similar product, online. "The data we're seeing suggest it may be more a change in shopping behavior than a lack of consumer demand," Fulgoni said. Other organizations measured a more muted response for the day: IBM Digital Analytics Benchmark reported that



Teresa Clark fills an order at the Amazon fulfillment center in Lebanon, Tenn. Online shoppers set a set a single-day spending record on Cyber Monday, despite deals being stretched out this holiday season.

(AP Photo/Mark Humphrey)

online sales rose 8.5 percent this year compared to last on Cyber Monday. That is less stellar growth than last year's, when IBM says online sales jumped more than 20 percent by its measure.

"As the holiday shopping season becomes less concentrated on a single day, retailers and marketers took advantage by making it easier for consumers to find the best deals on the go, whenever and wherever they chose to shop," said Jay Henderson, director of IBM Smarter Commerce.

Still Cyber Monday is the busiest U.S. online shopping day of the year — a title it has held since 2010. The name Cyber Monday was coined in 2005 by the National Retail Federation's online arm, called Shop.org, to encourage people to shop online. The name was also a nod to online shopping being done at work where faster connections made it easier to browse.

Some retailers painted a rosy picture of the day. Walmart.com said it received the most online orders in its history on Cyber Monday. It added that mobile made up about 70 percent of the traffic to its website between Thanksgiving and Cyber Monday. □

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Rolling along:

American RV industry maintains momentum

BRUCE SCHREINER

Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) —

RV manufacturers have made up more ground since being sideswiped by the Great Recession, and production of the rolling homes is expected to return next year to levels seen before the economic downturn hit.

Overall recreational vehicle shipments from manufacturers to dealers — a key measure of consumer demand — are expected to increase by nearly 4 percent to 361,400 units in 2015, the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association said Tuesday. Shipments totaled 353,400 units in 2007, the last year before sales tanked along with the economy.

Shipments to dealers' lots in 2014 are forecast at 348,000 units, up 8.4 percent from the prior year, the group said. The momentum carried into the last half of this year with the strongest third-quarter shipments since 2007, it said. October sales reached a nearly 40-year high mark for the month.

"We are absolutely rolling," RVIA President Richard Coon said at the start of an industry trade show in Louisville.

Industry leaders point to pent-up consumer demand, low interest rates, available credit and an improved economy for putting RV makers and dealers who survived the hard times back on the road to sustained growth. Falling fuel prices are another boost, they said.

This year's projected growth would be the fifth

straight yearly gain in RV shipments, following the low point in 2009 when sales totaled 165,700 units. Next year's forecast would be the industry's best performance since wholesale shipments totaled 384,400 RVs in 2005 and 390,500 in 2006. Those figures were inflated by government purchases of travel trailers to help house victims displaced by Hurricane Ka-

Wheeler said. Airstream's workforce of about 470 has grown by about 200 employees in the past two years to keep up with demand, he said.

John D. McCluskey said sales are up 50 percent since 2009 at his RV dealership in Florida. Sales surged by more than 20 percent in the past year, he said. He has hired more sales and service staff to keep up

factories were shuttered and those that survived cut their workforce. The industry lost about a third of its manufacturers, dealers and suppliers during the recession. The survivors are now reaping the benefits of market demand back in pre-recessionary territory.

"The people that are in the industry supplying product, marketing product today are making a lot more



Jeremy Burba, a sales manager at Camping World RV Sales in North Little Rock, Ark., walks past new motor homes parked at the dealership Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2014. Recreational vehicle shipments from manufacturers to dealers are expected to increase by nearly 4 percent in 2015. (AP Photo/Danny Johnston)

trina.

"It's hard not to call it boom times," said Airstream President Bob Wheeler. "There seems to be a lot of dealer confidence and consumer confidence and a lot of forward momentum. ... When you look at the numbers, we're really having a great run."

The Ohio-based subsidiary of Thor Industries is now producing more of its silver Airstream travel trailers than it did before the recession,

with growing customer demand.

"It's a lot more fun to be in the RV business these days," he said.

Industrywide demand is up for towable RVs and pricier stand-alone motor homes. This year's shipments of towables are expected to pass 2007 figures, but motor home sales still lag behind pre-recession figures, industry officials said.

During the deep economic downturn, some RV

money," Coon said.

Industrywide employment also has bounced back. The total workforce among manufacturers, suppliers, dealers and service departments is estimated at about 525,000, according to RVIA. Employment peaked at about 550,000 in 2007, then plummeted to about 280,000 in 2009.

Indiana is the clear manufacturing leader, accounting for 83 percent of RV production. □

Automakers to co-investigate Takata air bags

TOM KRISHER

AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — At least seven automakers are teaming up to find the cause of a problem with air bags used in their vehicles and how many cars to recall because of it.

Inflators in certain air bags made by the Japanese supplier Takata Corp. can explode with too much force and spew shrapnel into the passenger compartment.

So far, 14 million vehicles worldwide have been recalled due to the problem, including 8 million in the U.S. Takata has yet to pinpoint a cause, even though the recalls started a decade ago. The U.S. government wants Takata and automakers to add millions of cars across the U.S. to recalls currently limited to areas with high humidity. The automakers indicated Tuesday that they want to do their own testing, in addition to tests underway at Takata.

Toyota and Honda are leading the call for an industrywide investigation. In a statement, Toyota said it will ask the industry to hire an independent engineering company, and the affected companies would share results to figure out recall repairs. So far, General Motors, Nissan, Subaru, Chrysler and Ford have agreed to co-operate. One auto industry analyst suggested the automakers feel Takata is taking too long to find the cause.

The announcement came as Takata edged closer to a midnight deadline to agree to a national recall of driver's air bags or face civil fines and legal action from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The agency said Tuesday that it has yet to receive a response. □

US Financial Front:

Promotions, gas prices boost American auto sales

DEE-ANN DURBIN

TOM KRISHER

AP Auto Writers

DETROIT (AP) — American shoppers passed on the malls and headed to the car dealerships over Thanksgiving weekend. Black Friday promotions — coupled with falling gas prices, low-interest loans and hot new vehicles — drove U.S. auto sales higher in November, kicking off what's expected to be a strong holiday season.

Subaru and Chrysler led the major automakers with sales increases around 20 percent on strong demand for their small SUVs. It was Subaru's best November ever and Chrysler's best November in 13 years.

General Motors, Toyota, Honda and Volkswagen also reported gains. Sales fell at Ford, Hyundai and Nissan.

According to a National Retail Federation survey of 4,000 shoppers, sales were down 11 percent to \$50.9 billion over the four-day holiday compared to a year ago. A move by retailers to discount merchandise in the days and weeks before Thanksgiving appeared to cut down on store traffic over the holiday weekend. But that wasn't the case with cars. Car-buying site Kelley Blue Book estimated that 25 to 30 percent of November's new vehicle sales happened over the holiday weekend thanks to a flurry of Black Friday promotions. Because the holiday came late in the month, buyers also benefited from dealers' usual month-end sales push.

New vehicle sales rose 5 percent to 1.3 million, according to Autodata Corp. It was the second-fastest monthly sales pace this year, after August.

Sales are on track to end the year at around 16.5 million, said Jesse Toprak, a senior analyst with Cars.com. That's up 6 percent from 2013.

In November, buyers looking for really good deals could find them on outgoing 2014 models, while others snapped up 2015 mod-

els that are just arriving in dealerships, like the new Ford Mustang and Toyota Highlander.

The sales were fueled by incentives, like zero-percent financing on new Chevrolets and a \$3,500 credit on a new BMW. But automakers still made healthy profits as buyers loaded their vehicles with extras like navigation.

As of mid-November, buyers were spending an average of \$30,874 per vehicle, or \$165 more than the previous record of \$30,709 in October, according to consulting firms J.D. Power and LMC Automotive.

Low gas prices accelerated a trend toward SUVs. Gas prices fell 23 cents in November to a four-year low of \$2.76 per gallon, according to AAA. Sales of the new Nissan Rogue small SUV jumped 44 percent, while the Jeep Cherokee was up 67 percent.

The Honda CR-V small SUV saw its best November ever, with sales up 38 percent to more than 32,000. It was the first time since June 2011 that an SUV outsold the perennial leader, the Toyota Camry sedan.

Big SUVs were also hot; sales of the eight-passenger Lincoln Navigator were up 88 percent.

ler's 200 midsize sedan saw sales increases.

"You have to be new to make progress in the car

sonal boost in the winter, Toprak said, but this year low gas prices will amplify the increase.



A worker on a Chrysler car lot passes lines of mostly Jeep SUVs Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2014, in San Diego. Black Friday promotions — coupled with falling gas prices, low-interest loans and hot new vehicles — drove U.S. auto sales higher in November, kicking off what's expected to be a strong holiday season. Chrysler, which sells Jeep cars, posted its best November in 13 years.

(AP Photo/Gregory Bull)

Cars struggled to get noticed. Ford Fusion sales dropped 11 percent, while Nissan Altima sales were down 7 percent. For the most part, only new cars like Volkswagen's Golf subcompact and Chrys-

market right now," said Michelle Krebs, a senior analyst with AutoTrader.com. The industry expects more of the same in December, which is always a big month for luxury sales. Trucks and SUVs normally get a sea-

"It will probably be the best December in many, many years," Toprak said. GM's sales rose 6 percent to 226,000. Cadillac sales dropped 19 percent, but Buick and GMC both saw double-digit gains.



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Colorado: Marijuana dining on shaky legal ground

KRISTEN WYATT
Associated Press

ASPEN, Colorado (AP)

— Acclaimed chef Chris Lanter is talking through a demonstration on cooking with marijuana. As he prepares steak au poivre, he describes how to deglaze the pan with pot-infused brandy. How to pair marijuana with fine foods. One catch — there's no actual weed at his demonstration. Marijuana aficionados paid \$250 for a weekend-long celebration of marijuana and food, yet state and city regulations prohibit any "open and pub-

or medical marijuana is now legal in 23 states and the Washington capital district — though each state prohibits on-site consumption and pot sales in bars or restaurants.

As Colorado's recreational industry nears its first anniversary, authorities increasingly are cracking down on attempts to push the pot-dining envelope.

The city of Denver, where the marijuana industry is concentrated, wrote 668 tickets for "open and public consumption" through September, up from 117 the year before, when

tered events at private homes. Even chefs who will talk publicly about doing "medicated" catered house parties, like Lanter, are skittish about sharing details.

"There's so much potential here, and the interest is unbelievable. But right now, everybody's kind of scared to be doing it," says Lanter, owner and executive chef at Aspen's tony Cache Cache restaurant.

Which isn't to say folks aren't experimenting with the limits of the law.

A bed-and-breakfast in Denver offers guests sam-



Chris Lanter, chef and owner of Cache Cache French restaurant in Aspen, talks about cooking with marijuana to attendees of Cannabis Grand Cru festival in Aspen, Colo. Lanter has held cannabis-cuisine dinners at private homes but said Colorado laws against public consumption of marijuana prevent any public marijuana dining. (AP Photo/Kristen Wyatt)

lic" use of the drug, even at licensed businesses holding private events.

It's a strange dichotomy. The nascent marijuana industry in Colorado is moving well beyond just pot brownies. Dispensaries are doing a booming trade in cookbooks, savory pot foods and frozen takeout dishes that incorporate the drug. But for now, halting attempts at creating a marijuana dining scene have had mixed results.

Colorado may have legalized marijuana, but it still prohibits "on-site consumption," a caveat aimed at preventing Amsterdam-style coffee shops where pot can be purchased and consumed in the same place. Recreational

marijuana was legal, but sales were not. And the county that includes Colorado Springs is trying to crack down on so-called "smoke-easys," or private clubs that allow marijuana use, sometimes paired with refreshments.

Even private events at restaurants aren't safe. Denver authorities are using permit codes and alcohol laws to fine and even press charges against people trying to throw private events at which pot foods are served.

The result has been that chefs interested in infusing foods with pot, or pairing regular dishes with certain strains thought to accent a particular flavor, are unable to try it outside ca-

ples of cannabis strains alongside regular breakfast dishes. Guests at The Adagio get marijuana samples at daily happy hours, too, where strains of pot are paired with crudites and bacon-wrapped chicken bites, complete with tasting note presentations from growers.

"It's a way to bring our guests together and move away from campy, stereotypical pot foods," says Joel Schneider, CEO of the MaryJane Group, which operates two marijuana-friendly hotels.

But Schneider has to be careful. The pot he hands out goes only to paying hotel guests over 21, allowing him to argue the tastings aren't public. □

Hershey Co. exploring removal of corn syrup

CANDICE CHOI

AP Food Industry Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Hershey is looking at replacing the high-fructose corn syrup in some of its products with sugar.

Will Papa, chief research and development officer at The Hershey Co., told The Associated Press the company uses a mix of sugar and high-fructose corn syrup in its products but that it is "moving more toward sugar." "We take into account what consumers want. And consumers are telling us between the two, they prefer sugar," Papa said.

A switch to sugar would make Hershey a high-profile example of the move away from high-fructose corn syrup in the food industry. Many people say they avoid it because it has gained a bad reputation for fueling weight gain and diabetes, though health experts say there's not enough evidence to conclude it's any worse than regular sugar.

In an emailed statement, Hershey said its work on "exploring" the replacement of high-fructose corn syrup "is just under way" and that it did not have a time frame on when it might be complete.

A representative for Hershey, Jeff Beckman, cited Almond Joy, Fifth Avenue, Take 5 and York as examples of products that use corn syrup. He said classic Hershey bars are made with sugar.

"Our aim is to be transparent with our consumers about the ingredients we use in our products. Once we have more information to share, we will be back in touch," Hershey said in its statement.

Other products that have changed from high-fructose corn syrup to sugar include Gatorade drinks and Yo-plait yogurt.

As for health, the American Medical Association has said there's not enough evidence to specifically restrict the use of corn syrup. The Center for Science in the Public Interest, which advocates for food safety, has also said that there's no evidence that the sweetener is any worse nutritionally than sugar.

The Corn Refiners Association, an industry group, has been pushing back at the negative perceptions about high-fructose corn syrup, which is generally cheaper than sugar. In 2010, the association submitted an application to the Food and Drug Administration to have its sweetener renamed "corn sugar" on nutrition labels. The request was denied.

The association said it has also commissioned market-research firms Mintel and Nielsen to study perceptions of sweeteners and shared the results online. For instance, the group notes in media materials that "67% of consumers agree that moderation is more important than specific sweetener types."

John Bode, president of the Corn Refiners Association, said in an interview that the number of companies changing from corn syrup to sugar has slowed. Still, he said consumption of high-fructose corn syrup has declined more than other sugars.

Part of the reason is that people are cutting back on soda, which he said accounts for a majority of the market for high-fructose corn syrup.

In some cases, he noted that companies have switched back from sugar to high-fructose corn syrup after failing to see a notable sales spike. Hunt's Tomato Ketchup switched to sugar in 2010, but then switched back to high-fructose corn syrup in 2012. Lanie Friedman, a spokeswoman for ConAgra Foods, said demand for the version without high-fructose corn syrup wasn't "as strong as expected." □



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Israeli government crumbles; new election planned

JOSEF FEDERMAN

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's divided government fell apart Tuesday as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu fired two rebellious Cabinet ministers and called for a new election more than two years ahead of schedule.

Netanyahu's announcement plunges the country into a bitter campaign that seemed unlikely just a few days earlier. The election, expected to be held early next year, would come at a time of growing violence between Palestinians and Jews and deepening despair over the prospects for peace.

In a nationally televised address, Netanyahu said he had ordered the dismissals of Finance Minister Yair Lapid and Justice Minister Tzipi Livni. The pair, who head separate centrist parties, had emerged as his leading critics.

Netanyahu accused the two of trying to stage a "putsch," saying he could "not tolerate opposition from within the government." He said he would present legislation in parliament to dissolve the government and to hold elections "as soon as possible." The coalition includes Lapid's centrist Yesh Atid, which rose to power with promises of economic relief for Israel's middle class; Livni's Hatnuah, which is focused on reaching peace with the Palestinians; Jewish Home, a hard-line party linked to the West Bank settler movement; and Yisrael Beiteinu, a nationalist party that seeks to redraw Israel's borders to rid the country of many Arab citizens. Netanyahu's own Likud party is divided between more-centrist old timers and a young guard of hard-line ideologues.

The country experienced a brief period of unity over



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu gestures during a press conference in Jerusalem, Tuesday Dec. 2, 2014. Israel's prime minister fired two senior Cabinet ministers from his divided government Tuesday and said he would call early elections, plunging the country toward a heated campaign more than two years ahead of schedule.

(AP Photo/Gali Tibbon, Pool)

the summer as the military waged a 50-day war against Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip in response to weeks of heavy rocket fire.

Pope's anti-slavery drive gets support

NICOLE WINFIELD

Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Religious leaders from a half-dozen faiths signed a new Vatican initiative Tuesday to end modern-day slavery by 2020, declaring that human trafficking, organ trafficking and forced labor and prostitution are crimes against humanity.

Pope Francis was joined by the Hindu guru Mata Amritanandamayi, known as Amma, as well as Buddhist, Anglican, Orthodox, Jewish, Shiite and Sunni Muslim leaders in signing a joint declaration at an unusually high-profile ceremony inside the Vatican walls.

The declaration commits the signatories to do everything in their power within

their faith communities to work to free the estimated 35 million people enslaved across the world by 2020.

"In the eyes of God, each human being is a free person, whether girl, boy, woman or man, and is destined to exist for the good of all in equality and fraternity," the declaration read. Francis has made eliminating modern-day slavery one of the key priorities of his pontificate, inspired by his ministry in the slums of Buenos Aires. Earlier this year, the Vatican launched the Global Freedom Network, a multifaith initiative to encourage governments, businesses, educational and faith institutions to rid their supply chains of slave labor.

One of the network's founding members, the Walk Free Foundation, estimates that five countries account for 61 percent of the world's population living in slavery: India, with an estimated 14.2 million people enslaved, China, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, and Russia. Tuesday's ceremony, held in a palazzo in the Vatican gardens, added more faith leaders onto the network's initial roster. Francis sat between Amma, the ebullient Indian guru known for her marathon sessions hugging complete strangers, and the small, bald Sister Chan Khong, the first ordained monastic disciple of Zen Master Thich Hnat Hanh, a Vietnamese Buddhist monk and peace activist.

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Lebanon says it has detained wife and child of IS leader al-Baghdadi

BASSEM MROUE
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Lebanese authorities detained a woman and young boy believed to be the wife and son of the

supporters on Twitter and militant websites cast doubt on the reports. Adding to the confusion, the Lebanese army did not release an official statement



This file image purports to show the leader of the Islamic State group, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, delivering a sermon at a mosque in Iraq. Lebanese authorities have detained a wife and son of the leader of the Islamic State group and she is being questioned, two senior Lebanese officials said Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2014. (AP Photo/Militant video)

reclusive Islamic State group leader, and were questioning the woman and conducting DNA tests on the child, senior Lebanese officials said Tuesday.

If their identities are confirmed, Lebanon may use the pair as bargaining chips to win the release of soldiers and police taken hostage by the extremists in cross-border attacks earlier this year.

The woman, who was identified as an Iraqi, and the child were taken into custody about 10 days ago while carrying fake ID cards, the officials said.

Very little is known about al-Baghdadi's personal life, including how many wives and children he has. Conservative interpretations of Islam allow men to marry up to four wives. The Islamic State group did not immediately comment on the detentions, but the faction's

regarding the pair.

A Lebanese military official identified the woman as Saja al-Dulaimi who was held by Syrian authorities and freed in a prisoner exchange with the Nusra Front, Syria's al-Qaida-linked branch, earlier this year. The official said the woman "confessed during interrogation" that she was al-Baghdadi's wife.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations.

In March, the Nusra Front freed more than a dozen Greek Orthodox nuns in exchange for the release of dozens of female prisoners by the Syrian government. A woman named Saja al-Dulaimi was reportedly on the list of prisoners freed by Damascus.

A judicial official said the interrogation of the woman was being supervised by Lebanon's military prosecutor, Saqr Saqr, and that a

DNA test was underway to confirm that the child is her son. Experts said it would be difficult to confirm whether the woman is indeed al-Baghdadi's wife.

It was unclear what would have brought the woman and child to Lebanon, where IS controls no territory and enjoys only small — although growing — support in some predominantly Sunni Muslim areas.

The detentions added to the mystery that continues to surround al-Baghdadi, who has a \$10 million U.S. bounty on his head. He has only made one known public appearance — a sermon he delivered in July at a mosque in Mosul just days after IS declared him the head of an Islamic state, or caliphate, in the territory the group controls in Syria and Iraq.

Last month, Iraqi officials claimed he was wounded in an airstrike. The U.S. has not confirmed those reports, and al-Baghdadi released a new audiotope days after he was purportedly hit.

The Lebanese daily As-Safir first reported the detention of the Islamic State leader's alleged relatives, saying the woman and boy were taken into custody near a border crossing point with Syria. It said the arrest came in "coordination with foreign intelligence agencies."

If the pair's identities are confirmed, the detentions could give Lebanese authorities leverage in their attempts to reach a prisoner-exchange deal with militants from the Islamic State group and the Nusra Front. The extremists have been holding more than 20 Lebanese soldiers and policemen hostage since August, and have demanded the release of Islamist prisoners held by Lebanon. □

Officials: 3 Hong Kong protest leaders to surrender

HONG KONG (AP) — Three founders of Hong Kong's pro-democracy protest movement called Tuesday for an end to street demonstrations to prevent more violence and take the campaign to a new stage, but it wasn't clear whether student protesters, who make up the bulk of the activists, would heed the call.

Professors Benny Tai Yiu-ting and Chan Kin-man and Pastor Chu Yiu-ming said they planned to surrender to police on Wednesday to take responsibility for protests that have shut down parts of the Asian financial center for more than two months.

Instead of street protests, the three said they hope to continue the campaign through networking among civic groups, community organizing and education in democracy and human rights.

The three are founders of the Occupy Central movement, which is trying to force China's government to scrap its requirement that candidates in inaugural 2017 elections for Hong Kong's leader be approved by a panel chosen by Beijing. However, the three represent only one faction of demonstrators, most of whom are students.

Hundreds of demonstrators remain entrenched in the main downtown protest site, building tents, work tables and other infrastructure, even as energy has diminished on the streets since the first surge of demonstrations in late September.

Joshua Wong, a prominent student leader, said Monday that he and two other members of his group would go on an indefinite hunger strike to press their demands.

"We admit that it's difficult in the future to have an escalated action, so besides suffering from batons and tear gas, we would like to use our bodies to direct public attention to the issue," Wong said Tuesday. "We are not sure if the hunger strike can put pressure on the government, but we hope that when the public realizes the student hunger strike, they will ask themselves what they can do next."

In the early hours of Monday, police armed with pepper spray, batons and riot shields clashed with activists carrying umbrellas as authorities moved to clear them out of an area in front of the Hong Kong government complex where activist had been camped out.

The compound was forced to shut temporarily and the semiautonomous city's Beijing-backed leader said public patience was wearing thin, adding that police would "continue to take decisive action to enforce the law."

In a statement read to reporters, Tai, Chan and Chu said their surrender also would serve as a "silent denunciation of a heartless government."

"Tomorrow's battleground is expansive and now is the time to transform the people's strength into a sustainable civil society movement, to sow the spirit of democracy deep into the community," they said in the statement. □



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Ukraine parliament approves new government

PETER LEONARD
Associated Press

KIEV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukraine's parliament approved the formation of a new government Tuesday, bringing an end to weeks of behind-the-scenes political wrangling following an October election that ushered in a group of pro-Western parties.

The new Cabinet has come together as government troops and Russian-backed separatist forces agreed on a tentative cease-fire in one war-stricken region along the Russian border. That may provide much-needed breathing space to a national leadership that will have to work fast to keep the anemic economy from collapse.

With the backing of parliament now secured, Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk,

40, will continue in a position he has occupied since February.

Five political blocs, including Yatsenyuk's Popular Front party, last month formed a parliamentary coalition that has vowed to enact an agenda of drastic economic and political reform.

Yatsenyuk said the country is exhausted and drained by war, Russian military aggression and political conflict. "The country needs radical changes and reforms," he told parliament before the Cabinet vote.

Tasks to be completed by the incoming government before year's end include bringing in laws to give more budget-raising powers to local authorities and reducing the number of taxes, Yatsenyuk said.

U.S. Vice President Joe



Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko speaks during parliament session in Kiev, Ukraine, Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2014. Ukraine's parliament has approved the formation of a new government, bringing an end to weeks of behind-the-scenes political wrangling following an October election that ushered in a group of ardently pro-Western parties.

(AP Photo/Efrem Lukatsky)

Biden welcomed the formation of the new government.

"Today's announcement on the formation of a new

government sets the stage for the difficult but necessary process of implementing reforms and delivering results," he said in a state-

ment. "The United States will support Ukraine's new government to stabilize its economy, strengthen democratic institutions, and fight corruption."

New Cabinet ministers include several figures who received Ukrainian citizenship by presidential decree, including Finance Minister Natalie Jaresko, an American with experience working for the U.S. State Department.

Many of the ministers in the Cabinet retain their posts, including the foreign, defense and interior ministers. The incoming government has vowed to root out corruption and re-orient Ukraine toward Europe. President Petro Poroshenko and Yatsenyuk have both said they eventually want to see Ukraine join the European Union and NATO.

Russian government warns of recession next year

N. VASILYEVA
Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — The Russian government has acknowledged that the country will fall into recession next year, battered by the combination of Western sanctions and a plunge in the price of its oil exports. The news caused the stock market to drop and pushed the ruble to a fresh record low against the dollar.

The economic development ministry on Tuesday revised its GDP forecast for 2015 from growth of 1.2 percent to a drop of 0.8 percent. Russian households are expected to take hit, with disposable income seen declining by 2.8 percent against the previously expected 0.4 percent growth.

Russia's economic outlook

is at the mercy of the global market for oil, a key export that finances the bulk of the state budget. Sanctions over Moscow's role in eastern Ukraine are making things worse, hurting Russian banks and investment sentiment in particular.

The national currency, the ruble, has dropped by more than 40 percent this year as the economic troubles mounted.

While Russia's troubles could do some economic damage to Europe, they are unlikely to have much impact on the U.S. economy, the world's largest. Russia is the 28th-biggest market for the United States, absorbing \$11.1 billion worth of U.S. goods last year.

"Russia-U.S. trade is hardly large," said Eric Lascelles, chief economist at RBC

Global Asset Management. "I don't think we should be worried" about the impact of a Russian recession on U.S. exports.

In fact, the U.S. is benefiting from the lower oil prices that are driving Russian toward recession, and the money being pulled out of

Russia is being pumped into U.S. and European financial markets, helping to keep interest rates low, Lascelles said.

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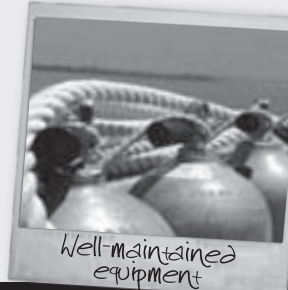
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Mexican president submits police reform bill

MARK STEVENSON
Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico's most corruption-plagued municipal police forces would be replaced by state police within two years under a bill President Enrique Peña Nieto has submitted to Congress. Municipal police in the states of Guerrero, Tamaulipas, Jalisco and Michoacan would be placed under state control quickly, because "these are the states most urgently in need of attention," according to the bill submitted late Monday. In September, a drug cartel-infiltrated municipal police force in the Guerrero state city of Iguala detained 43 students and turned them over to the gang, which reportedly killed them. The city's mayor and many of his police officers have been arrested. In the northern border state of Tamaulipas, many municipal police forces have already been effectively dissolved, because they were unable to face up to warring drug cartels or had been coopted by them. In Michoacan, civilian vigilantes were invited to join a state rural police force that has taken over security duties in many towns in the state's hot lands region. The rest of Mexico's 31 states would have presumably more

time to implement the reforms. However, analysts and experts warned that state police are not always more trustworthy than city or town cops. According to a report by the Common Cause civic group, more state police



Municipal police officers leave a police station after the entire police force was disbanded and temporarily replaced with the Navy, as part of an effort to root out police corruption in Veracruz, Mexico. Mexico's President Enrique Peña Nieto submitted a bill to Congress this week that would replace more municipal police, particularly in the states of Guerrero, Tamaulipas, Jalisco and Michoacan, with state police within two years.

(AP Photo/Felix Marquez)

(20,521) have failed background or vetting tests than municipal police (18,177) in recent years. Analyst Alejandro Hope said that state police forces "with a few exceptions, are deformed institutions, deeply vulnerable to corruption and intimidation." In a column in the El Universal newspaper, Hope wrote that most state forces are relatively small, and only five have internal affairs of-

fices to investigate misconduct by their officers. The plan also will be expensive. The state with the most effective record in creating a new statewide police force, the northern border state of Nuevo Leon, had to recruit out of state to

find clean, qualified, willing candidates, and pay them well, at more than \$1,000 per month. The state even provided housing in special, secure housing developments. Nuevo Leon Gov. Rodrigo Medina noted he had to raise taxes to fund his security reforms, something that can be done in a relatively wealthy industrial state like Nuevo Leon, but would be hard in some poorer, southern states.

"It requires a financial capacity that most state governments don't have," said analyst Mentor Tijerina, in a column in the Reforma newspaper.

The proposal would allow states to absorb or re-hire some municipal officers, but Tijerina said, "It is more effective to start from zero, than patch together" existing forces.

The proposal submitted to the Senate by President Enrique Peña Nieto must be approved by both houses of Congress and a majority of state legislatures.

It also would allow the Interior Department and the attorney general to temporarily take over corrupt municipal governments infiltrated by gangs, with Senate approval. Special elections would be called quickly to replace local officials. The bill painted a sad picture of most of Mexico's more than 1,800 municipal police forces. While some of the country's largest cities have relatively large, modern police forces, many small municipalities — about 600 — have no local police at all. "In several cases, municipal police have been corrupted or infiltrated by criminal groups," according to bill, which noted that only 39.2 percent of Mexican expressed confidence in local police. □

In The Caribbean

Plane crash in the Bahamas kills US man: authorities

NASSAU, Bahamas (AP) — A small plane carrying 11 people crashed near the Bahamas on Tuesday, killing a 77-year-old U.S. man, authorities said. The Navajo Chieftain operated by Ferguson Air had departed the island of Eleuthera and was preparing to land in New Providence when it crashed, Superintendent Paul Rolle said. Police said the pilot apparently alerted officials that he was having problems and tried getting the plane close to shallow water before it lost power some 550 feet (170 meters) from the coast. The other passengers were hospitalized, but their conditions were not immediately known. Divers from a nearby aquatic sports business helped rescue the survivors, authorities said. □

Bahamas to seek space for holding migrant families

NASSAU, Bahamas (AP) — Officials in the Bahamas say they will seek additional space to hold migrant women with children amid complaints about conditions at the island chain's main detention center. Foreign Minister Fred Mitchell says the government wants to separate families with children from the general population at the Carmichael Road Detention Center. Mitchell said Tuesday that the immigration and social services agencies are working on the issue but it's not yet clear when the issue will be resolved. The Bahamas last month began enforcing tougher new rules on residency and work permits as part of an effort to curb the illegal migration that has brought thousands of people to the island chain in recent years. □

Puerto Rico's House approves oil excise tax

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)

— Puerto Rico's House of Representatives on Tuesday approved a bill that would increase the excise tax on a barrel of crude oil by 68 percent. The Senate planned to debate the measure late Tuesday. If approved by the upper house, the measure will take effect next

March.

Approval by the lower house came two days after Gov. Alejandro Garcia Padilla announced that legislators had reached a consensus on the measure. Garcia has said that public transportation in the U.S. territory will be paralyzed if the bill isn't approved because the island's Highway

and Transportation Authority is struggling financially. The proposed increase from \$9.25 to \$15.50 tax per barrel is expected to generate about \$178 million a year.

Supporters say the tax increase is needed to help sell up to \$2.9 billion in bonds and strengthen the finances of the Highway

and Transportation Authority, which owes \$2.2 billion to Puerto Rico's Government Development Bank, about 21 percent of the bank's portfolio. Additional revenue generated by the proposed increase also would help refinance at least \$1 billion in loans made to the Highway and Transportation Authority. □



Aruba Marriott Showcases Handmade Sugar Village!

PALM BEACH - As an annual holiday tradition, the Aruba Marriott Resort and Stellaris Casino is showcasing a beautiful holiday display in the resort lobby made of pure sugar.

This year Executive Chef Teddy Bouroncle together with Senior Sous Chef Charles Wagner and Executive Sous Chef Romeo Penacino created a unique handmade sugar village for guests to enjoy during

the holiday season. Constructed with 400 pounds of powdered sugar, the 5.76 square meters display features 23 delft blue village houses, a lighthouse, rivers and roads made from scratch. It took Senior Sous Chef Charles and his team one month to create the sugared structures and one day to set up the display in the lobby. The Aruba Marriott Resort invites everyone to pass by and take a photo



to with the sugar village and hashtag #arubasugar-

village and #arubamarriott when sharing the photos

on social media. Happy Holidays! ☐



Aruba Marine Park Foundation Hosts Successful Fundraising Event

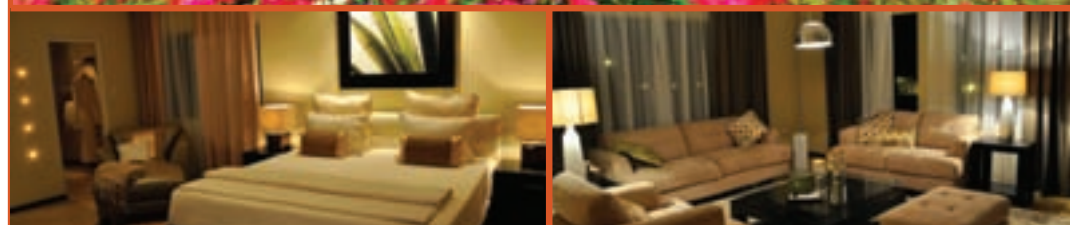


HADICURARI - On Sunday evening the Aruba Marine Park Foundation hosted a sold out and thoroughly enjoyable Fundraiser Event to view the sunset smiling upon you, more than 150 guests enjoyed each other's company featuring a



touching performance of skillful violinists Nicola Grigorin from Romania, Angela Flores of Venezuela and Heather MacArthur of Washington, DC. The lovely concert was followed by wine tasting from the very best of Romar Trading. Talented Sushi chef Andriani Geerman, owner and operator of E Sushi Shap of Tanki Lendert partnered up with Wine and Dine chefs sharing bountiful amounts of his popular restaurant's most requested Lionfish rolls. Andriani's Lionfish rolls pleased the audience of sushi fans, blending effortlessly Japanese cuisine with his typical signature Caribbean flair. Lionfish is a very tasty, firm white fish with a higher concentration of heart - healthy Omega -3 fatty acids. Scoring more health

benefits than Red Snapper, Grouper, Mahi Mahi and Wahoo, Lionfish can be considered the Salmon of Coral Reefs." "Lionfish is an invasive species which threatens to displace our local species of fish. To prevent this from happening, the indigenous Indo- Pacific Lionfish population has to be controlled" explains Marine Biologist Byron Boekhoudt pleased with the evening's event. To create more awareness, raise funds and let people enjoy a culinary event, co- sponsor Aruba Wine and Dine offered several tastings of creative lionfish dishes. Ilja Cybulski, International chef and avid diver along with food blogger/Chef Joost Boerman circulated tasty signature Lionfish dishes and shared recipes to party goers. □



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3rd Annual Lionfish Challenge at De Palm Island

BALASHI - The 3rd Annual Lionfish Challenge at De Palm Island organized by De Palm Tours in conjunction with Aruba Marine Park Foundation will take place on Sunday December the 7th 2014. There will be Lionfish information sessions, live demonstrations of the anatomy of a Lionfish, free advice from health consultants, live music and delicious Lionfish tastings. Come and experience what we do to eliminate Lionfish in Aruba.

As a major island-wide issue at the moment, these creatures are invading Aruba's coral reefs and their presence is upsetting the ecological balance of the marine ecosystems worldwide.

Consequently, Aruba's tourism and fishing industries suffer substantially from this as well. Campaigns and cooperation



strategies have been setup throughout the Caribbean to try and respond to this grave problem that the Lionfish have posed, which is why De Palm Tours is taking action against the invasion. The main goal of this challenge is to promote joint efforts in bringing awareness to the current Lionfish problem that continues to pose a major threat to the marine life around Aruba and to teach about the positive sides of eating the Lionfish. Visit De Palm Island this

Sunday December 7 and aside from the all-inclusive offerings at De Palm Island, like the unlimited banana boat rides, all-you-can-eat food and drink, snorkel tours, free salsa lesson and water park entry, there will also be Lionfish information sessions, live demonstrations of the anatomy of a Lionfish, free advice from health consultants, live music and delicious Lionfish tastings prepared by Head Chef of Screaming Eagle, Erwin Husken.

Divers can sign in as a Lionfish Hunter at Hadicurari Centro di Pesca (next to Moomba) for free until Wednesday December 3rd. There will be attractive prizes for different categories such as cash, weekend stays, dinners for two, gift certificates from De Palm Tours and much more. For more information about the rules call Hadicurari Centro di Pesca at 586-0820 or 586-6610.

Visit De Palm Island on Sunday December 7th and experience what we do to eliminate Lionfishes in Aruba. Tickets are for sale online via www.depalm-tours.com, at your hotel concierge desk or at De Palm Tours Sales Center (LG Smith Blvd., one block from Certified). For more information visit our website or www.facebook.com/depalmisland, your concierge or call (+297) 522-4500. □



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Thomas and Pam were honored at the Marriott Surf Club



PALM BEACH - Recently, Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Pam Constantini were honored as Distinguished Visitors after returning to Aruba for more than 10 consecutive years. The symbolic honorary title

is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for between 10-and-19 years consecutive. Mr. Ricardo Croes representing Aruba Tourism Au-



thority conducted the ceremony at the Marriott Surf Club Resort. Mrs. Pam commented that she will never change her vacation island for any other island. The top rea-

sons for returning provided by the honorees were they consider Aruba to be the "Happy Island," the great weather, the Friendly Aruban Hospitality, the white sand beaches and the lo-

cal food. On the pictures Mr. Ricardo Croes from ATA together with Thomas and Pam and also hotel Rep. Joanne at the Marriott Surf Club Resort. □



NHL Capsules Smith-Pelly, Beleskey lead Ducks past Bruins 3-2

The Associated Press
ANAHEIM, California (AP)

— Devante Smith-Pelly scored the tiebreaking goal late in the second period, and Matt Beleskey added his career-best 12th goal in the Anaheim Ducks' 3-2 victory over the Boston Bruins on Monday. Frederik Andersen made 32 saves and Sami Vatanen also scored for the Ducks, who reclaimed the Western Conference lead. The Ducks fell out of first place in the overall NHL standings last weekend with their first back-to-back regulation losses of the season.

Brad Marchand and Simon Gagne scored for the Bruins, who have lost three of four.

Tuukka Rask stopped 25 shots as Boston opened a tough four-game Pacific Division road swing without injured veterans David Krejci and captain Zdeno Chara, who didn't make the trip.

LIGHTNING 6, RANGERS 3
NEW YORK (AP) — Brett Connolly's second goal of the game during a third-period power play lifted Tampa Bay to its third straight win over New York. With Martin St. Louis off for slashing, Connolly scored past Henrik Lundqvist at 5:34 for his fourth of the season.

Continued on Page 21

TIGER'S BACK

Tiger looks to past swings to aim at future wins

Page 18

In this Friday Aug. 8, 2014, file photo, Tiger Woods walks up the 18th green during the second round of the PGA Championship golf tournament at Valhalla Golf Club in Louisville, Ky. Associated Press

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Woods returns with an eye to the past

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

WINDERMERE, Fla. (AP) — Tiger Woods is making his latest comeback in golf with an eye to the past.

Equipped with a new teacher and a stronger body, Woods said Tuesday he is working on a swing that incorporates previous moves that date as far back as his amateur days. He referred to it as "new, but old," and the 14-time major champion will start testing it this week against an 18-man field of elite players at the Hero World Challenge.

How old were some of those videotapes he watched of his previous swing?

"Actually, it's pretty interesting trying to find a VHS recorder," Woods said. "I have a lot of tape like that. Fortunately, my mom is of age where she has that still in the house. So that was very beneficial to look at some of the old tapes."

Otherwise, it's another new beginning.

This is the fifth time Woods has returned from injury — the back, this time — over the last five years. The breaks have ranged from four weeks to four months. He last competed on Aug.



In this Friday, Aug. 8, 2014 file photo, Tiger Woods winces after tee shot on the sixth hole during the second round of the PGA Championship golf tournament at Valhalla Golf Club in Louisville, Ky.

Associated Press

9 when he missed the cut at the PGA Championship, ending the shortest season of his career (eight tournaments) and the first time he did not have a top 10.

Woods said he had enough time off to let his body heal and to think about where he wants his game to go. First, he split with swing coach Sean Foley, ending a three-year relationship that produced eight PGA Tour wins but no majors.

"I think that physically, I just

wasn't able to do some of the things that we wanted to do in the golf swing," Woods said.

Woods said there was no reason to look back at old swings at the time because he felt he was headed in the right direction — three victories in 2012, and five wins in 2013 in which he was voted PGA Tour player of the year for the 11th time. Those two years were relatively free of injuries.

"But unfortunately, physi-

cally I was getting damaged doing it," he said. "So in retrospect, you look at it. Was I ever hurt when I was little? Granted, I don't think we all were. I think we all could jump off roofs and nothing would break. But playing detective and looking back on it, you have to somewhat have an understanding physically of where you are at the time." He announced just over a week ago that he had hired Dallas-based Chris Como as a swing consultant, after longtime friend Notah Begay put them together.

Woods said he had a plan, and that Como was on the same page. "I was very surprised and very excited to see what he felt my swing should look like, and should look like going forward," Woods said. "Because that was very similar to the vision I had."

Woods did not delve into specifics of his swing, which he rarely did when going through an overhaul with Butch Harmon, then Hank

Haney and Foley.

"It is new, but it's old," he said. "I say that because I haven't done it in a very long time. We looked at a lot of video from when I was a junior, in junior and amateur golf. ... And it was quite interesting to see where my swing was then and how much force I could generate with a very skinny frame. How did I do that? How do I generate that much power? That's kind of what we are getting back into it."

Even so, Woods concedes that age — he turns 39 at the end of the month — has kept him from overpowering golf the way he once did.

Along with four operations on his left knee, and problems with his Achilles tendon in 2011, Woods lately has been coping with back problems. He had surgery a week before the Masters and missed two majors. Upon his return in the summer, he had his worst 72-hole showing in the British Open and missed the cut in the PGA Championship.

"I've gotten stronger. I've gotten more explosive. I've gotten faster," he said. "I now just need to hit more balls. But the body is good. I don't have the sharp pain like I used to at the beginning of the year. I don't have that anymore. I still have some aches and pains, just like anybody else who is my age and older."

It took Woods about 18 months to work out the big change under Harmon, and about a year to adapt to changes under Haney. He won his first tournament just over a year after working with Foley. He doesn't know how long this change will take, although he said the motor patterns are vaguely familiar.

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Dolphins rally, beat Jets 16-13 on late FG

BARRY WILNER

AP Pro Football Writer

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey (AP) —

The Miami Dolphins kept their playoff hopes intact by rallying for a 16-13 victory over the New York Jets on Monday when Caleb Sturgis made a 26-yard field goal with 1:57 remaining.

New York (2-10) rushed for 277 yards on 49 carries, but made enough key errors in the second half to lose. The Dolphins remained a factor in the wild-card race thanks to rookie Jarvis Landry's eight receptions, Lamar Miller's 4-yard TD run early in the fourth quarter, and plenty of defense when the Jets needed to pass.

New York threw only 13 times, fewest in the NFL this season, and gained 49 yards. The usually reliable Nick Folk missed two field goals.

All of that offset a season high on the ground as Chris Johnson had his best performance for the Jets with 105 yards.

Sturgis also made field goals of 43 and 44 yards.

After trailing most of the way, Miami tied it on Miller's run with 10:24 remaining. That brought the loudest cheers of the night; thousands of Dolphins fans at MetLife Stadium braved the wet, windy conditions. Jets problems with penalties on special teams hurt them all night, and a holding call against Saalim Hakim set up the Dolphins at New York's 39 on the tying drive. On the winning possession, backup tight end Dion Sims had catches of 18 and 17 yards.

The Jets kept pounding the ball effectively. They even got into field goal position

after Miami made it 13-13. But Koa Misi's sack pushed New York back to the Miami 27 and Folk missed wide left for the second time. Folk had made 18 of 20 entering the game.

That's the way the Jets' season has gone, of course.

Early on, Greg Salas, with his fourth team in four pro seasons, scored his first career touchdown. But the receiver didn't get it through the air, instead scoring on a well-conceived reverse

Miami Dolphins running back Lamar Miller (26) leaps over New York Jets defensive end Sheldon Richardson (91) for a touchdown during the fourth quarter of an NFL football game, Monday, Dec. 1, 2014, in East Rutherford, N.J.

Associated Press

on which the Dolphins had no one close to him until he reached the 2. He dived into the end zone to cap an 85-yard drive, but that ended his night; Salas hurt a hamstring.

Sturgis missed a 43-yard field goal on the next possession for Miami, further boosting New York's confidence. The Jets took the ball into Dolphins territory for the third successive series, and got more points on Folk's 40-yard field goal. As New York kept grinding away on the ground — it had 210 yards rushing in the opening half — it also ate up the clock. But Folk missed from 48 yards and Miami took advantage on Sturgis' 43-yard field goal to end the half.

Sturgis added his 44-yarder to start the second half, and Folk followed with a 45-yarder that bounced off the crossbar and through, making it 13-6. □



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MLB umpire Dale Scott comes out as gay

NEW YORK (AP) — Major League Baseball umpire Dale Scott says he is gay, the latest such disclosure in sports.

The 55-year-old told the website Outsports.com he married Michael Rausch in November 2013 and that MLB and the other umpires were aware of his sexuality. Scott has been a member of the big league staff since 1986 and is a crew chief.

He worked the World Series in 1998, 2001 and 2004.

Scott said he made a deliberate decision to go public in a low-key manner without "some banner headline."

"That's not how I operate," he was quoted as saying by Outsports. "It's not a shock to MLB management because they're well aware of my situation and it's not a shock to the um-



This June 5, 2014, file photo shows umpire Dale Scott calling out St. Louis Cardinals' Yadier Molina after a play review in the fifth inning of a baseball game against the Kansas City Royals at Kauffman Stadium in Kansas City, Mo.

Associated Press

pire staff. If it would have been, I don't think I would have done it."

Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig praised Scott.

"To his friends and colleagues throughout the game, Dale is universally regarded as a class act," he said in a statement. "All of us at Major League Baseball are very proud of him, just as we have always been."

Scott provided Referee magazine a photo of himself with Rausch going to last year's opening series in Sydney.

The caption in the October issue stated: "He and his longtime companion, Michael Rausch, traveled to Australia for the 2014 season opener between the Diamondbacks and Dodgers."

"I realized that it could open a Pandora's box, but this is not a surprise to Major League Baseball, the people I work for," Scott said in

a story posted by Outsports on Tuesday.

"It's not a surprise to the umpire staff. Until Mike and I got married last November, he was my same-sex domestic partner and had his own MLB I.D. and was on my insurance policy." Scott's decision to go public follows that of others in sports.

—Basketball center Jason Collins became the first openly gay player in one of the major North American professional leagues in April 2013. He announced his retirement last month at age 35.

—Defensive end Michael Sam, the Southeastern Conference's 2013 co-defensive player of the year, came out in February.

He was drafted by the St. Louis Rams with the 249th pick in May, cut in August, signed by Dallas for its

practice squad, then released by the Cowboys in October.

—Midfielder Robbie Rogers announced he was gay in February 2013 following his release from Leeds in England.

He signed with Major League Soccer's Los Angeles Galaxy that May and has revived his career this year with a move to defender.

—University of Massachusetts junior guard Derrick Gordon became the first openly gay player in Division I men's basketball in April. He made his announcement on ESPN and Outsports.

—Other out professional players include WNBA stars Brittney Griner and Seimone Augustus and National Women's Soccer League players Abby Wambach and Megan Rapinoe. □

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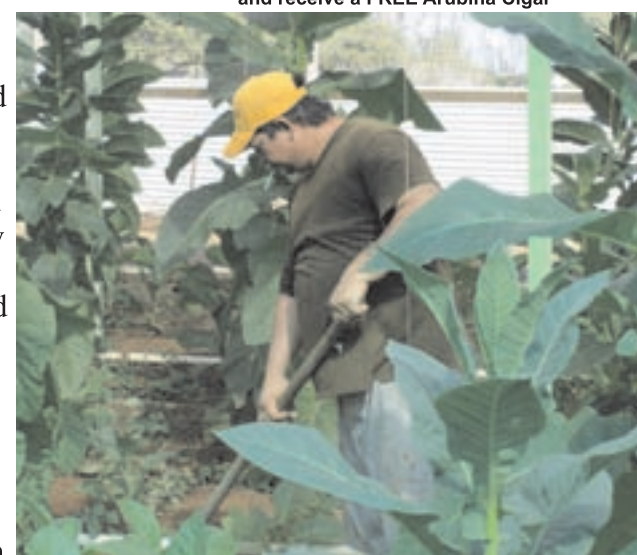
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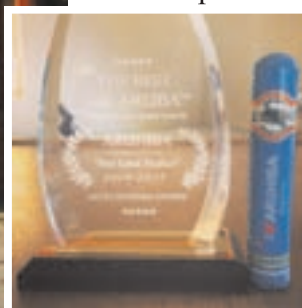
ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi, a true native Aruban started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced hand rolled cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrocchi always had a interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crops. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba, he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The whole process took him 10 years to perfect. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the moulding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. Their handmade cigar box is specially designed with their "Aruhiba" logo. Petrocchi considers

Aruhiba as a promotion for Aruba through its fine cigars. The company sells Aruhiba to the international markets as well. Visit their retail store located in front of the Historic Dutch Windmill in front of the RIO Hotel, with any purchase of \$20 and up you receive a free "Aruhiba" cigar or ask for their gift box of 5 cigars get 1 FREE for only \$37. They open from Monday to Saturday from 9 am till 6:30 pm and on Sundays from 10 am to 4 pm. Aruhiba cigars are now available at the gift stores in your resort and at well-known cigar stores. For their complete selection and attractive by the box prices visit their retail store. Tours are also



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NBA Capsules

Leonard leads Spurs over 76ers 109-103

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Kawhi Leonard scored a game-high 26 points and had a crucial three-point play in the final minute to help the San Antonio Spurs defeat the winless 76ers 109-103, extending Philadelphia's club-worst losing streak to start the season to 0-17.

The Spurs (13-4) played without stars Tim Duncan (rest) and Tony Parker (shoulder). Even without the duo's more than 31 points out of the lineup, San Antonio had little trouble dispatching Philadelphia. Aron Baynes scored 15 points and Manu Ginobili and Cory Joseph each added 14 for San Antonio, which won its eighth straight. Leonard also had 10 rebounds while tying a career-high in points.

Michael Carter-Williams had 24 points and 11 rebounds and Alexey Shved chipped in 19 points for Philadelphia.

The 76ers also were short-handed, as leading scorer Tony Wroten (knee) missed his second straight game and rookie first-round pick Nerlens Noel (hip) sat after getting injured in Sunday's practice.

Philadelphia became just the fourth team in league history to open a season

with 17 losses, joining the 1998-99 Clippers (0-17), 1988-89 Heat (0-17) and the 2009-10 Nets (0-18). The 76ers can tie the Nets for the worst start in NBA history on Wednesday at Minnesota with a potential chance to break the record at home on Friday against Oklahoma City.

NUGGETS 103, JAZZ 101

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Ty Lawson had 15 points and made a double-pump jumper to beat the shot clock with 29.6 seconds left that boosted Denver over Utah.

The game heated up after Arron Afflalo was ejected and the Jazz stormed back from a 22-point deficit to tie the game in the final minutes.

Lawson, who also had 12 assists, made the game-winner from the left wing between two Jazz defenders.

Gordon Hayward was blocked and Trey Burke missed a potential go-ahead 3-pointer on the other end before Darrell Arthur clinched the game with two free throws with 4.2 seconds remaining. Alec Burks dunk at the buzzer completing the scoring.

Wilson Chandler scored 10, Afflalo had 14 and Arthur

added 12 for the Nuggets, who have won eight of their last 10 games.

Hayward scored 25 points, Burks had 22 and Burke chipped in 18, but Utah's losing streak hit six games — the longest skid since March 10-19 last season.

WIZARDS 107, HEAT 86

WASHINGTON (AP) — John Wall had 18 points and 13 assists and Washington made its first seven 3-pointers to beat Miami. The Wizard held the Heat to 2 for 22 from beyond the arc for the game. Rasual Butler scored 23, and Marcin Gortat added 15 points and 10 rebounds for the Wizards, who never trailed and led by 21 in the first half and 25 in the second.

Chris Bosh led Miami with 21 points, and Dwayne Wade had 20 in his second game back from an injured right hamstring. A night earlier, Wade returned after missing seven games and scored 27 points in a victory at New York.

He played 32 minutes in that game, and 27 on Monday.

CLIPPERS 127, TIMBERWOLVES 101

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Blake Griffin and J.J. Redick each scored 23 points before sitting out the fourth quarter as Los Angeles returned



San Antonio Spurs' Kawhi Leonard, left, goes up for a shot against Philadelphia 76ers' Brandon Davies during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Monday, Dec. 1, 2014, in Philadelphia. San Antonio won 109-103.

Associated Press

from the most successful road trip in club history with a rout of Minnesota. DeAndre Jordan had 13 rebounds and 11 points

for the Clippers, who won their fifth in a row following their 6-1 trip and beat Minnesota for the 10th straight time. □

NHL Capsules

Continued from Page 17

Tyler Johnson gave the Lightning a two-goal lead 1:24 later with his second of the night, and Ondrej Palat added an empty-netter with 26.4 seconds left to give Tampa Bay its fourth consecutive victory. Victor Hedman had three assists, and Ben Bishop made 32 saves to improve to 8-0 against the Rangers — including three wins in 15 days. He even had an assist on Connolly's first. Matt Carle added a goal for the Lightning, who outscored the Rangers 15-7 in the three games — including 11 goals at Madison Square Garden.

Kevin Hayes, Jesper Fast and St. Louis scored for the Rangers, who had

won four of five. Lundqvist struggled and made only 15 saves.

COYOTES 5, OILERS 2

EDMONTON, Alberta (AP) — Tobias Rieder scored two short-handed goals in 58 seconds on the same penalty kill as Arizona handed Edmonton its 10th consecutive loss.

Oliver Ekman-Larsson, Mikkel Boedker and Martin Erat also scored for the Coyotes, who snapped a three-game skid and won for the second time in seven games. They extended their point streak against Edmonton to a franchise-record 16 games.

Jordan Eberle and Jeff Petry each had a goal for the Oilers (6-15-4), who have not won at home since October. They dropped to 0-12-3 against Western Conference op-

ponents.

CANADIENS 4, AVALANCHE 3

DENVER (AP) — Max Pacioretty scored the tie-breaking goal late in the third period to send Montreal past Colorado.

P.K. Subban and Andrei Markov each had a goal and an assist, and Jiri Sekac also scored for Montreal, which ended a three-game losing streak. Carey Price made 26 saves for the Canadiens. Ryan O'Reilly, Daniel Briere and Tyson Barrie had goals for the Avalanche. BLUE JACKETS 2, PANTHERS 1

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Boone Jenner scored at 10:05 of the third period to lift Columbus over Florida, ending a six-game losing streak.

Matt Calvert also scored



Anaheim Ducks defenseman Sami Vatanen, left, celebrates his goal with Devante Smith-Pelly against the Boston Bruins during the second period of an NHL hockey game in Anaheim, Calif., Monday, Dec. 1, 2014.

Associated Press

for the Blue Jackets, who had won only two of 17 to drop to the bottom of the Eastern Conference standings. Sergei Bobrovsky finished with 24

saves. Panthers rookie Aaron Ekblad, the top overall draft pick, scored his third goal of the season for Florida, which has lost nine in a row to Columbus. □



Blood, Salt and Tears

By: Dr. Carlos Viana

President John F. Kennedy said, "All of us have in our veins the exact same percentage of salt in our blood that exists in the ocean, and, therefore, we have salt in our blood, in our sweat, in our tears. We are tied to the ocean. And when we go back to the sea -- whether it is to sail or to watch it -- we are going back from whence we came."

Salt is the spark plug of our body. Although eating an excess of salt is associated with high blood pressure, not having enough salt can cause hypo-tension or low blood pressure which results in dizziness or loss of consciousness. Salt is essential for the prevention

of muscle cramps, maintaining sexuality, preventing varicose veins and the salt in our bones is help them stay firm.

In studies on salt and blood pressure processed table salt was used and researchers did not adjust for things like, high alcohol consumption, high body mass index, low potassium excretion, and dehydration. Unrefined sea salt is a healthier choice than common table salt. Natural sea salt contains minerals that the body needs.

High blood pressure rarely has symptoms. Blood pressure values can be pushed higher by pain, medications or anxiety, including the stress of visiting the doctor. Have your pressure

taken while lying down in a stress-free environment. Blood pressure (BP) comes in two numbers. The high number is the pressure of the heart pumping your blood. The low number is the pressure your blood pushes against on the walls of your arteries when your heart is "resting." Normal blood pressure should range between 100/70 to 120/80. If your BP is higher, you have a greater risk of developing problems with your heart and or arteries.

"Standard" treatment for blood pressure problems is pharmaceuticals. Studies have shown that taking blood pressure lowering drugs can cause side effects, like impotence and an increased risk for heart disease, just what you are trying to avoid.

The World Health Organization has listed hypertension, or high blood pressure, as one of the conditions treated effectively by acupuncture.

In many cases high blood pressure can be controlled through changes in diet and lifestyle. Lifestyle factors include caffeine or alcohol intake, stress, lack of exercise, smoking and body weight. Dietary problems include; high sugar, high saturated fat and in-

sufficient magnesium, vitamin C and healthy fats.

Some people do not excrete sodium. Diuretics can make the problem worse by also lowering potassium. Natural sea salt, not table salt, will not harm you if your intake of potassium and water is balanced. Fresh fruit is a good source of potassium. Drinking mineral water is critical for nearly every bodily function. Dietary supplements can also provide support, but check your personal needs with a clinical nutritionist. If this is not enough, check for toxins with a hair analysis test contributing to these and other health problems.

Get The Point! Blood pressure problems are more than an excess of salt. Identifying imbalances and counseling on diet and lifestyle can go a long way. In our home by the beautiful Caribbean Sea, there are no chemicals in our kitchen. We drink plenty of mineral water, use only natural sea salt, pressure lowering, fresh garlic, good omega oils like virgin olive oil, and gladly cry salty tears while cutting our onions to flavor our food. The facts on salt are another of the many dietary misconceptions you have heard. Call so we can help you put the spark

back in your plugs.

CARLOS VIANA, Ph. D. is an Oriental Medical Doctor (O.M.D.) having studied in China; a US Board Cert. Clinical Nutritionist (C.C.N.), an Addiction Professional (C.Ad.), Chairperson of the Latin American Committee of the International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology (IAOMT), a Rejuvenating Cell Therapist specializing in Age Management, has a weekly radio program, writes and lectures extensively. For information: VIANA HEALING CENTER, Kibaima 7, St Cruz TEL: 585-1270 Web Site: www.vianaheal.com

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Chinese gay dating app grows to 15 million users

LOUISE WATT

ARITZ PARRA

Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — By day, Ma Baoli was a high-ranking officer in a seaside city police force. By night, he ran a website for gay people to share experiences and on which he spoke under a pseudonym about the pressure he faced as a homosexual.

After several years, the police force found out and told him he could not run a private website that was earning money from advertisements while serving as a police officer.

Ma chose his website, a move that later proved fruitful. His Danlan.org has spawned a Chinese-language dating app for men called Blued that has garnered 15 million users, 3 million of them outside China, over two years.

And last month, his company, Blue City, received \$30 million in funding from Silicon Valley venture capital company DCM Ventures. Ma hopes to use the money to expand abroad and possibly prepare for an IPO. He is also considering launching a dating app for lesbians.

In a country where the government considers any activism dangerous and where homosexuality has traditionally been taboo, Ma has managed to build his business partly by reaching out to government agencies and showing them he can provide a public service in spreading safe-sex messages.

In 2012, he was invited to meet with now-Premier Li Keqiang because of his AIDS prevention work.

Wu Zunyou, director of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention's AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases center, praised the app for its usefulness in conveying information to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, or LGBT, community.

"It's very hard to receive so many registered users in such a short time," Wu told The Associated Press last week at an AIDS awareness event held by Blue



In this photo taken Thursday, Nov. 27, 2014, Ma Baoli, founder of Danlan.org, speaks near a banner at the Blue City office in Beijing, China.

City and also attended by local government officials. "None of our public awareness websites can receive such attention. This is a very important channel to be able to spread information about AIDS prevention among the LGBT community."

The app allows users to look for people by location or the last time they logged on. It also enables group settings so people can organize activities such as hiking or assembling a basketball team, as well as providing information from health authorities on locations for HIV testing and treatment.

Andrea Pastorelli, a policy specialist at the United Nations Development Programme, said the Chinese CDC had recognized the app's usefulness in reaching people they were unable to.

"They are having a real issue reaching out to the most marginalized people and in China that's where the epidemic is," he said.

"The fact that they have been able to attract this much money shows that there is interest in the so-called pink market," Pastorelli added. "Private companies are realizing that gay people exist and gay people represent a

huge market."

An investment manager at the Beijing office of DCM Ventures who asked not to be named because she was not authorized to speak to the media con-

firmed that the company had invested \$30 million in Blue City, saying its future outlook was promising.

"Five percent of the total population are LGBT people," she said. "Social atti-

Twitter tries to make it easier to report abuse

NEW YORK (AP) — Twitter is trying to make it easier for victims and witnesses of online harassment to report it. The short messaging service said Tuesday that the new tools will roll out to users over the coming weeks. It's available now for a small group of Twitter's 284 million members. Among other changes, the updates streamline the process for reporting abuse, especially on mobile devices.

Twitter says it also made "behind-the-scenes improvements" that speed up response times to reported tweets and accounts. Harassment and bullying on Twitter is not new. Recently, an online campaign dubbed "GamerGate" has led to the harassment of women in the video game industry for criticizing the lack of diversity and how women are portrayed in gaming.

"We are nowhere near being done making changes

in this area," wrote Shreyas Doshi, director of product management and user safety, in a blog post. "In the coming months, you can expect to see additional user controls, further improvements to reporting and new enforcement procedures for abusive accounts."

That said, it is unlikely that the improvements will put an end to harassment on Twitter. While users can block accounts, and Twitter can delete them, there is nothing stopping bullies from setting up new accounts under different names.

A recent survey by the Pew Research Center found that nearly three-quarters of American adults who use the Internet have witnessed online harassment. Forty percent have experienced it themselves. The types of harassment ranged from name-calling to physical threats. □

tudes toward gay people will become more and more tolerant in the future."

For Ma, 37, who goes by the online pseudonym Geng Le, the investment signals a shift in attitudes already among Chinese toward homosexuals.

Five years ago, his website Danlan.org would be regularly shut down.

Today, that doesn't happen anymore, and it carries discussions on whether to legalize same-sex marriage, for example.

"I now feel more and more comfortable saying, 'Yes, I'm gay and yes, what I do is run a gay-themed website,'" he said.

Still, the app does provide privacy for people who are worried about others finding out about their sexual orientation by allowing them to use their smartphone to meet someone, he said.

A law against "hooliganism" that had been used to target gays was eliminated in 1997 and homosexuality was declassified as a mental disorder in 2001, but some clinics still promise to "cure" people by offering conversion therapy that includes electric shocks. China does not recognize same-sex partnerships and no laws outlaw discrimination against homosexuals. However, more organizations are being created in China that are specifically devoted to LGBT advocacy issues, and gay bars that once could only be found in bigger cities like Beijing and Shanghai are increasingly opening up in smaller cities.

Ma quit his job as deputy director of a division of the Qinhuangdao police force in March 2012.

He still misses being a police officer, his dream job since childhood. He says some former colleagues cannot accept what he is doing because they think homosexuality is "abnormal." Ma says he hopes to change their thinking.

Blue City employs about 40 software engineers, designers, salespeople and advocates. □

Wall Street gains on energy companies

MATTHEW CRAFT
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Energy and health-care companies led major stock indexes higher on Tuesday, even as crude oil resumed its slide. General Motors rose after reporting stronger sales, and Biogen, a biotech company, soared following news that its drug for Alzheimer's disease showed promise.

Reports that fewer people turned out to shop over the Thanksgiving weekend helped knock the market down on Monday. But those concerns were likely overblown, as other evidence suggests that people simply wanted to avoid the crowds at Black Friday sales, said Brad McMillan, the chief investment officer at Commonwealth Financial. IBM Digital Analytics, for instance, said that sales on Cyber Monday jumped 8 percent. "I think what you're seeing is a little reality settling in," McMillan said. "Look at Cyber Monday numbers. You see that and say hmm, maybe it's not going to be so bad

points, or 0.6 percent, to 4,755.81. Oil and gas companies led nine of the 10 industries in the S&P 500 higher.

The one economic report out Tuesday gave investors some encouragement. Newly built houses and schools lifted U.S. construction spending in October to the highest level since May, the Commerce Department said. Overall construction spending climbed 1.1 percent, higher than economists' forecasts.

General Motors posted solid sales gains in the U.S. last month, helped by discounts and falling gas prices. GM's sales climbed 6 percent to nearly 226,000 in November. The carmaker's stock gained 32 cents, or 1 percent, to \$33.26.

Among other companies making big moves, Avanir Pharmaceuticals soared on news that Otsuka Pharmaceuticals of Japan plans to buy the company for \$3.5 billion. Under the terms of the deal, Otsuka would pay Avanir investors \$17 per share in cash. Avanir's stock jumped \$1.92, or 13

percent, to \$16.92. Crude oil prices resumed their long slide, falling \$2.12 to settle at \$66.88 a barrel in New York trading. The slump has rippled throughout financial markets in recent weeks, putting stress on oil-exporting countries

such as Russia. On Tuesday, Russia's government forecast that the country's economy will shrink next year. That helped send Russia's currency down 5 percent against the dollar and drive its RTS stock index down 3 percent.

"The economic conditions Russia is facing right now are aggressively against its economy," said Jameel Ahmad, Chief Market Analyst for FXTM. Elsewhere in Europe, Germany's DAX slipped 0.3 percent, while France's CAC 40 inched up 0.3 percent. In the U.K., the FTSE 100 index of leading British shares gained 1.3 percent.

In Asia, Japan's Nikkei rose 0.4 percent. In China, the Shanghai Composite Index climbed 3 percent, and Hong Kong's Hang Seng added 1.2 percent.

Traders will have a batch of economic news to digest over the rest of the week. On Thursday, the European Central Bank meets to discuss whether the region's flagging economy needs more support. On Friday, the U.S. Labor Department



Trader Frederick Reimer works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2014. U.S. stock indexes crept higher Tuesday, as the market bounces back from a loss the day before.
(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

after all." The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 13.11 points, or 0.6 percent, to 2,066.55.

The Dow Jones industrial average gained 102.75 points, or 0.6 percent, to 17,879.55, while the Nasdaq composite rose 28.46

percent, to \$16.92. Crude oil prices resumed their long slide, falling \$2.12 to settle at \$66.88 a barrel in New York trading. The slump has rippled throughout financial markets in recent weeks, putting stress on oil-exporting countries

releases its look at employment in November, a report that often sends markets swinging.

In other trading on Tuesday, government bond prices fell, pushing the yield on the 10-year Treasury note up to 2.29 percent. □



Marsha Lawson talks with a representative from CVS at the Cleveland Career Fair in Independence, Ohio. Optimism among chief executives of large U.S. companies has reached a two-year high, driven by greater optimism about hiring and sales.
(AP Photo/Tony Dejak)

More CEOs plan to boost hiring in next six months

C. S. RUGABER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Chief executives at the largest U.S. companies expect sales to keep growing in the next six months and also plan to step up hiring. The Business Roundtable said Tuesday that 40 percent of its member CEOs plan to hire more workers, up from 34 percent in the third quarter. Nearly three-quarters project their sales will rise, roughly the same as the previous quarter. The findings suggest that slowing growth overseas hasn't caused large corporations to pull back on their hiring plans. That bodes well for the government's report on November job gains, to be released Friday. Still, the CEOs say they are less likely to invest in new facilities or equipment: 13 percent say they plan to cut such spending, up from just 10 percent in the previous quarter.

Randall Stephenson, CEO of AT&T Inc. and chairman of the Roundtable, said the survey results reflect an economy that is "expanding, but at a rate well below its potential, especially when you compare it to previous recoveries."

Stephenson urged Congress to pass legislation this month that would extend a series of tax breaks for businesses, including a provision that lowers taxes for companies that invest in industrial equipment and other big-ticket items.

The Roundtable also plans to urge Congressional leaders in meetings this week to approve legislation that would give President Barack Obama broad authority to negotiate trade agreements with Europe and a group of Asian countries.

The survey was conducted between Oct. 22 and Nov. 12, and is based on 129 responses from the Roundtable's 200 member CEOs. Stephenson said that growth has been bolstered this year by the lack of any major budget fights between Congress and the White House. In previous years, budget battles have led to a government shutdown and brinksmanship over the government's borrowing limit.

Still, the Roundtable forecasts the economy will grow only 2.4 percent in 2015, roughly in line with the modest growth that has occurred since the recession ended in 2009. That's more pessimistic than many Wall Street and business economists, who are projecting 3 percent growth. The economy expanded at a 4.6 percent annual rate in the April-June quarter and 3.9 percent in the July-September. That was the healthiest six months of growth since 2003. But consumer spending rose only slightly in October and business investment in industrial machinery, computers and other equipment declined. □

Home prices accelerated for October

JOSH BOAK

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. home prices rose at a faster year-over-year pace in October than in September, snapping a seven-month slowdown.

Real estate data provider CoreLogic said Tuesday that prices increased 6.1 percent in October compared with 12 months earlier. That was up from September's year-over-year increase of 5.6 percent.

Still, home values are rising more slowly than they were earlier this year, when 12-month gains were averaging nearly double their current pace.

The price momentum began to tail off in the middle of the year as home values in more cities and states neared the record highs last seen shortly before the Great Recession began in late 2007.

Higher prices have reduced affordability, especially because the incomes of many would-be buyers have yet to match their pre-recession levels. Lending standards also remain comparably tight.

Previous price increases led investors to pull back from the home market, and first-time buyers have yet to fill the void created by their departure.

Price growth will likely remain mild as a result, CoreLogic said. The firm projects that home values will rise 5.1 percent over the next 12 months. Roughly half the country's homes will match or surpass their pre-recession prices by mid-2015, it predicts.

Every state reported a price gain in October. CoreLogic said prices reached new highs in Colorado, Louisiana, Nebraska, New York, North Dakota, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and Wyoming. In 27 states, home values are within 10 percent of their previous peaks.

There are still pockets of the country — including parts of Texas, Seattle and Denver — where prices are rising faster than in the rest of the country because of their relatively strong job markets, incomes and home prices, said Sam Khater, deputy chief economist at CoreLogic. □

US construction spending up 1.1% in October

JOSH BOAK

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Newly built homes and schools boosted U.S. construction spending in October to the highest level since May.

The Commerce Department said Tuesday that construction spending rose a seasonally adjusted 1.1 percent in October, after having slipped 0.1 percent in September.

Fueling the gains in October was a 1.8 percent increase in spending on single-family houses. A similar boost in building schools led to a 2.3 percent increase in government construction spending. Meanwhile, private construction of power plants and commercial centers slipped in October.

Building activity has been slowly improving for much of 2014, although its contribution to broader economic growth has been relatively modest. Homebuilding has crept upward, limited by meager wage gains that have barely outpaced inflation. That has cut into the amount of money that people have to spend on homes or rent. Diane Swonk, chief economist at Mesirow Financial, called the report "welcome news" but cautioned that single-family house construction "remains a shadow of previous levels."

"This is showing up in less construction employment and a smaller acceleration in wages than we would like given the age of this recovery, which in dog years is well into middle age,"

Swonk said.

October's solid growth in homebuilding underlines that sector's weakness.

"The October rebound does not undo the damage" caused by the marked slowdown in construction spending since the start of 2014, said Ian Shepherdson, chief economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics.

Over the past 12 months,

The median price of a new home has risen 15.4 percent in the past 12 months to \$305,000, a pace that's more than double the average annual price increase for sales of existing homes tracked by the National Association of Realtors. Still, builders are hiring at a slightly faster clip than last year. Construction companies are adding an average of 14,000 workers

suggest that gross domestic product rose at an annual rate of 4.1 percent during the July-September quarter, rather than the 3.9 percent figure recently reported by the Commerce Department, said Daniel Silver, an analyst at JPMorgan Chase.

Architectural firms are also reporting greater demand for their services, however, a sign that construction



A man works on the roof of a building under construction in Middlefield, Ohio. The Commerce Department reported on U.S. construction spending in October on Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2014.

(AP Photo/Tony Dejak)

private residential construction spending has risen just 1.9 percent to a rate of \$353.8 billion. That lags behind total construction spending, which has climbed 3.3 percent from a year ago to \$971 billion. New-home sales have risen only 1 percent, according to a separate Commerce Department report. Builders are largely targeting wealthier buyers. That can boost profits but often means less construction to fuel economic growth.

a month so far this year, compared with a monthly average of 11,083 in 2013. The challenge is that stronger hiring and economic growth during 2014 has yet to translate into the wage growth that could further propel construction spending and hiring.

And because Tuesday's report contained upward revisions to August and September construction spending, the sector likely fed into faster overall economic growth. The revisions

spending should improve in the months ahead.

The American Institute of Architects said that its October billings index was 53.7. Any score above 50 indicates that billings increased. A breakdown of the index suggests that municipal governments and nonprofits are spending more on architectural designs, after having kept their spending in check during the more than five-year recovery from the Great Recession. □

Otsuka to buy US drugmaker Avanir for \$3.5B

The Associated Press

Otsuka Pharmaceutical will spend \$3.5 billion in cash to buy Avanir Pharmaceuticals in a deal that expands the Japanese drugmaker's portfolio of neurologic disease treatments.

Avanir shareholders will receive \$17 per share, according to the agreement announced Tuesday. That represents a 13 percent premium over Avanir's

closing price Monday.

Avanir makes Nuedexta, which treats a condition called pseudobulbar affect. The ailment is tied to diseases like multiple sclerosis or traumatic brain injuries and involves involuntary emotional outbursts such as laughing or crying. Nuedexta, which Avanir launched in the United States in 2011, brought in \$94 million in revenue in the year that ended last June.

Avanir Pharmaceuticals Inc., based in Aliso Viejo, California, was founded in 1988 and employs about 500 people. It also has developed a treatment, now in late-stage testing, for agitation associated with Alzheimer's disease. Its pipeline of drugs under development also includes potential Parkinson's disease and migraine treatments.

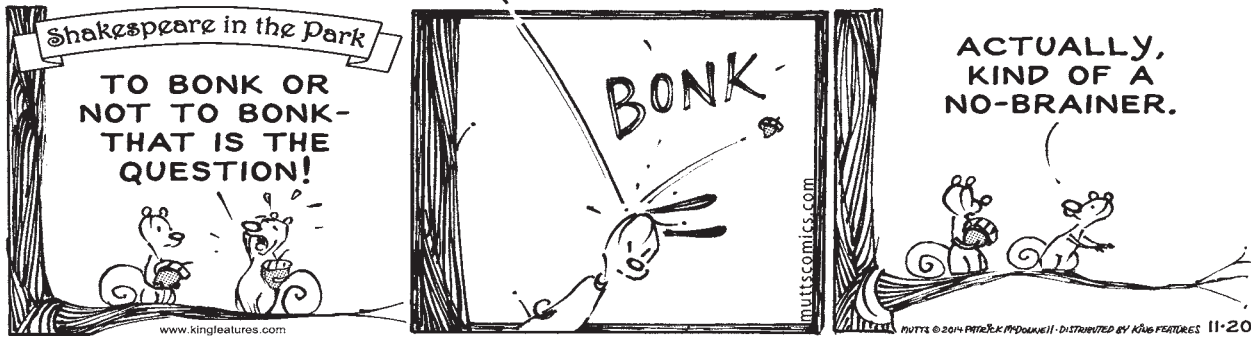
Otsuka Pharmaceutical

Co. Ltd. employs more than 28,000 people and is a subsidiary of Otsuka Holdings Co. Ltd.

The boards of both companies have approved the deal, which is expected to close in next year's first quarter.

Shares of Avanir jumped nearly 13 percent, or \$1.91, to \$16.91 Tuesday, hours before markets opened. The stock has soared since closing 2013 at \$3.36. □

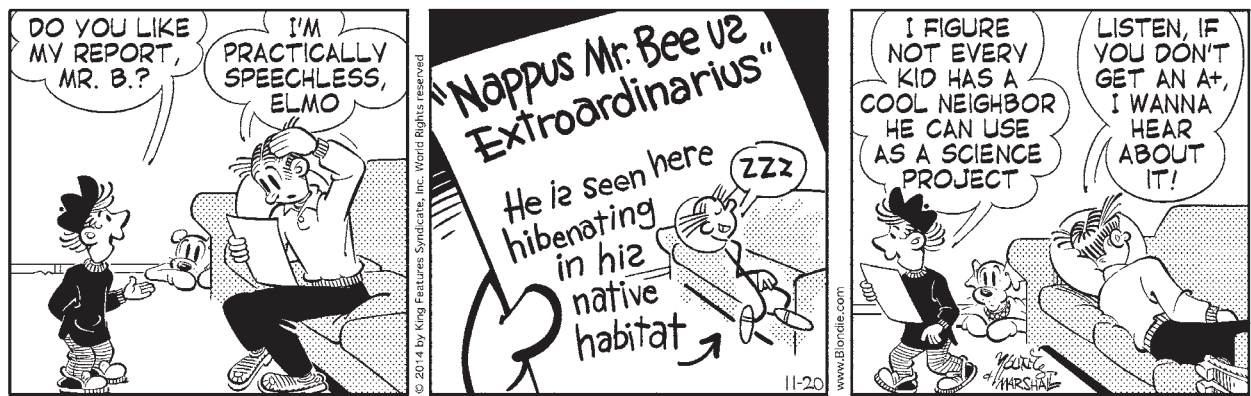
Mutts



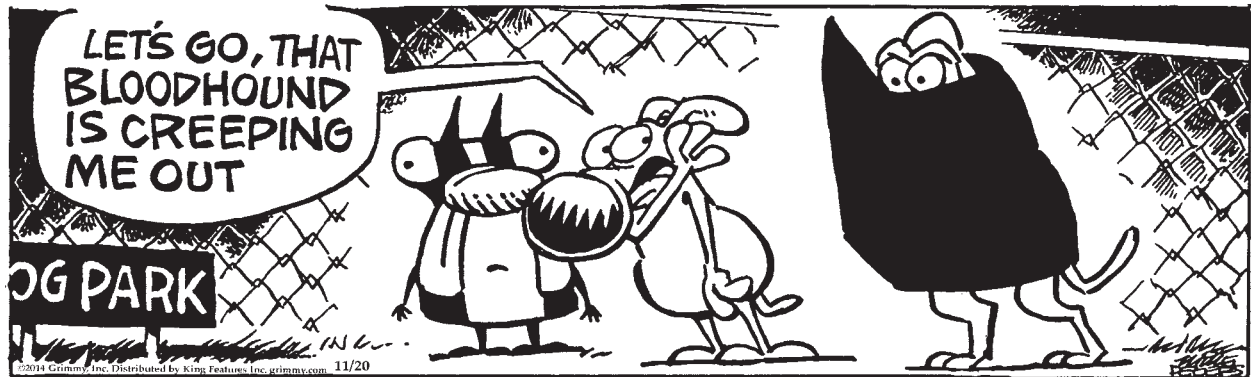
6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	3						1	
2		5					7	4
			4		1			
		1		5		9		
			1	3	7			
		8		9		2		
			2		8			
4	7					8		9
	6						3	

Difficulty Level ★★

11/20

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

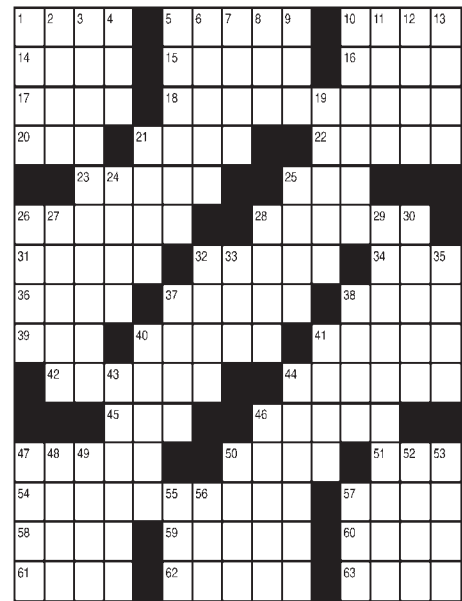
7	1	9	3	8	2	4	5	6
4	2	3	6	7	5	8	1	9
5	6	8	9	1	4	7	3	2
9	8	2	5	3	7	1	6	4
6	3	7	1	4	9	5	2	8
1	5	4	2	6	8	3	9	7
8	9	1	4	5	6	2	7	3
2	7	5	8	9	3	6	4	1
3	4	6	7	2	1	9	8	5

Difficulty Level ★★

11/19

ACROSS

- Treaty
- Wild winds
- Part of a tooth
- Under the covers
- Saying
- Bump __; meet by chance
- Misfortunes
- Like a motormouth
- Pinky or Bruce
- Apple's center
- Cat cries
- Borg of tennis
- Record speed letters
- Founders' Day procession
- Crab Louies and Waldorfs
- No longer sleeping
- Spicy; flavorful
- Huge bird from Australia
- Top of the head
- Misrepresent
- Close noisily
- "You __ what you eat"
- Bowling alley button
- Cricket's sound
- Van Halen and Cibrian
- Misgivings
- Leprechaun
- Keep a cooking turkey moist
- Syrup flavor
- Judicial order
- JFK's Attorney General
- Horseman
- Valley
- Mom's sister
- Review of the financial books
- Perched on
- Overdue
- Impoverished
- Swap __; flea market
- Bucket



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

11/20/14

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

S	H	E	L	F	A	C	E	S	M	A	M	A
C	O	V	E	R	L	U	A	U	A	G	E	S
O	R	A	T	E	B	L	U	R	T	E	R	N
W	A	S	H	E	D	U	P	F	R	I	N	G
A	D	A	M	R	E	E	N	T	E	R		
S	L	A	L	O	M	E	E	R	I	E		
A	I	L	M	O	O	D	S	N	E	C	K	S
L	A	S	H	N	I	G	E	R	S	O	A	K
T	R	O	O	P	L	A	T	E	R	A	L	I
L	O	W	E	R	B	E	A	T	E	N		
S	I	M	I	L	A	R	M	E	S	S		
P	R	A	N	K	S	C	O	L	E	S	L	A
L	A	N	E	H	U	L	A	N	A	I	V	E
I	T	I	S	E	T	O	N	T	L	I	M	I
T	E	A	S	R	E	D	S	T	L	E	D	S

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11/20/14

- Baseball officials
- Lunch or dinner
- Complaint
- Greenish-blue
- Close
- Football kick
- Irritates
- Broad
- Price
- Ice mass
- Remove text
- Saved
- Tiny & delicate
- Light brown
- Pigtail, usually
- Water barrier

Toronto's new mayor takes the oath of office

ROB GILLIES

Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Toronto's new mayor pledged better days are ahead and thanked an ailing Rob Ford for his public service as he took the oath of office on Tuesday. John Tory, a straight-laced, button down moderate conservative, formally replaced Ford as mayor of Canada's largest city. Ford's term was plagued by scandals involving public drinking and crack cocaine use. He announced in September that he wouldn't seek reelection as he battles a rare form of cancer. Despite the cancer, he opted to seek the suburban City Council seat where he launched his political career and where

his everyman style and conservative fiscal policies first gained a faithful following that became known as Ford Nation. He won his old seat in a landslide. Tory said he missed Ford during the campaign and he declared a motion to thank Ford for his public service. It passed unanimously. They later shared a fist bump at the inaugural meeting of the council. Ford avoids shaking hands to avoiding exposure to germs during chemotherapy. He recently underwent a fourth round of treatment. Ford has previously said the doctors have told him he has a 50-50 chance of surviving the rare cancer in his abdomen, malignant liposarcoma.

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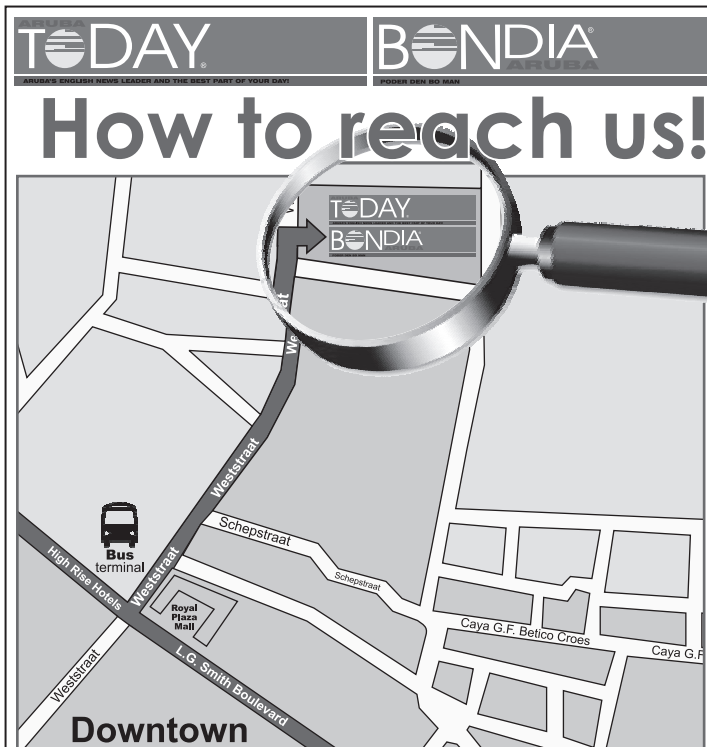
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England's King Richard III identified with DNA

MARIA CHENG
AP Medical Writer

LONDON (AP) — Scientists say there is "overwhelming evidence" that a skeleton found under a parking lot is that of England's King Richard III, but their DNA testing also has raised questions about the nobility of some of his royal successors.

The bones of the 15th-century king were dug up in the city of Leicester in 2012, and experts have published initial data suggesting they belong to Richard, including an analysis of his curved spine and the injuries that killed him.

Richard was the last English monarch to die on a battlefield, in 1485.

In the new study — probably the oldest forensic case ever solved — scientists compared DNA from the skeleton to living relatives and analyzed DNA data identifying eye and hair color, which they matched to the earliest known portrait of the king.

"The probability that this is Richard is 99.999 percent," said Turi King, a geneticist at the University of Leicester who led the research. When she and colleagues compared the skeleton's DNA obtained from the ground-up powder of one tooth and a leg bone to samples provided by a 14th cousin on Richard's maternal side, they found a perfect match.

Based on the skeleton's DNA, King and colleagues hypothesized that Richard had blue eyes and blond hair in childhood, which darkened with age.

With no contemporary paintings of the king available, they compared their findings to



This is an undated file photo released by the University of Leicester, England, showing a portrait of Britain's King Richard III who's skeletal remains were found underneath a car park in Leicester, England, in September 2012, after being missing for around 500 years.

Associated Press

the earliest known painting of him, which depicts the monarch with light brown hair and blue eyes, painted about 25 years after his death.

The research was published Tuesday in the jour-

This is an undated file photo released by the University of Leicester, England, showing the remains human skeleton found underneath a car park in Leicester, England, September 2012, which has been declared "beyond reasonable doubt" to be the long lost remains of England's King Richard III, missing for 500 years.

Associated PressR

nal, Nature Communications.

Scientists also compared the skeleton's DNA to samples from living relatives on Richard's father's side. They found no match, a discovery that could throw the nobility of some royals into question.

While researchers weren't able to say where on the family tree the adultery occurred, they said the findings potentially raise questions about the legitimacy of Henry V, Henry VI and the entire Tudor dynasty, including Henry VIII and Elizabeth I.

Still, Kevin Schurer, pro vice chancellor of the University of Leicester and another study author, said claims to the throne are based on more than simply having royal blood and also rest on other things such as battlefield victories and royal marriages.

He said England's current royal family — which has a line of descent from the House of Tudor — should not be worried. "We are not in any way indicating

that Her Majesty (Elizabeth II) shouldn't be on the throne," Schurer said.

Researchers said it was the first time there was scientific evidence that questioned medieval lines of succession in the monarchy.

Other academics said history is littered with claims and counter-claims of royal legitimacy.

"When Richard took the throne, he said his brother Edward should never have been king because he was illegitimate," said Steven Gunn, a tutor in history at Oxford University.

Gunn said it was unlikely anyone would ever learn the truth behind the most damaging rumors about Richard — that he murdered his young nephews to hang onto his crown. Still, Gunn said, a more complex picture of the king is now emerging.

"This opens up a new posthumous discussion about Richard's legacy," the historian said.

"He has been misrepresented as just a king with scoliosis." □



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Forever young, NBC's 'Peter Pan' is live and aloft

FRAZIER MOORE

AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The boy who refused to grow up: It sounds like men today in this youth-obsessed culture. But nearly a century before his name found its way into pop psychology, Peter Pan was born as the high-flying hero of a play by Scottish writer James M. Barrie.

Many adaptations later, 1954's Broadway musical version of "Peter Pan" came to TV in a live NBC telecast in 1955, then was re-staged a year later with Mary Martin yet again in the title role.

Now NBC is recapturing its youth for a revival of "Peter Pan," broadcast live Thursday (8 p.m. EST) and starring Allison Williams ("Girls") as Peter, the cocky young champion of Neverland, and Christopher Walken as the deliciously evil pirate, Captain Hook. The cast also includes Christian Borle, Kelli O'Hara and Minnie Driver as the narrator.

Officially titled "Peter Pan Live!" this three-hour event is a follow-up to last year's live "The Sound of Music," which drew an astonishing 18.6 million viewers.

Why "Peter Pan" this go-around?

"It's a classic, a really great musical, that has its DNA in live television," said Neil Meron, who with his partner, Craig Zadan, are back as executive producers. "To follow 'The Sound of Music' and create some sort of beachhead for a holiday tradition, you look for titles that can fit into that little box," he said, pointing to a nearby TV, "and 'Peter Pan' fits very snugly."

More than snug, "Peter Pan" will be bursting wide open with more subtext to the characters and narra-



This Nov. 8, 2014 image provided by NBC shows, from left, John Allyn as Michael Darling, Allison Williams as Peter Pan, Jake Lucas as John Darling, and Taylor Louderman as Wendy Darling from the musical version, "Peter Pan Live!" airing Thursday, Dec. 4, at 8 p.m. EST.

Associated Press

tive than its Broadway forebear, Meron said. Its glorious score (including "I Won't Grow Up," "I'm Flying" and "Never Never Land") is supplemented with additional tunes by the team of Jule Styne, Betty Comden and Adolph Green, including a song dropped from the original "Peter Pan" before it reached Broadway.

"It's much bigger and much more challenging than 'The Sound of Music' last year," said Zadan. "A lot more musical numbers, a lot more dancing, plus the sword fights and flying. And a live dog." With no do-overs allowed.

But maybe the biggest difference between this year and last: Everyone knew and cherished the 1965 Julie Andrews-starring film of "The Sound of Music," which made tampering with it a dicey proposition. "We had a gigantic shadow over us last year," said Meron. "This year, the shadow isn't as big." Then he

added with a smile, "Peter Pan DOES find his shadow in the show."

That's a fact. Early in the action, we see Wendy with a needle and thread reattach Peter's shadow, which he had left behind on a previous visit to the Darling children's nursery. Then he teaches Wendy and her two little brothers how to fly. Then off they fly to Neverland!

NBC is hoping viewers take the trip too — and they don't need to wait until Thursday's broadcast.

The social media buzz around #peterpanlive had already started Tuesday. Some of it was fueled by a "leaked" tape of Tony winner Jane Krakowski "auditioning" for Peter in a manner not appropriate for children in a parody posted on funnyordie.com.

NBC also released a mash-up video of the show's cast, fans, singer/songwriter Alex G. and DJ Tay James singing a decidedly pop ver-

sion of "I Won't Grow Up." Come Thursday night, the Twittersphere could be jammed with moment-to-moment scrutiny of the show — at least, if there's any lesson to be drawn from last year's live telecast, when the Web was alive with snark.

"People who have nice things to say keep it to themselves," said Zadan, "and the people who have nasty things to say don't, so they're out there tweeting away. But it creates massive audiences. Social media drove viewership last year with people following Twitter and saying, 'Oh! This I have to see for myself.'"

What they'll see in "Peter Pan Live!" is "a beautiful story about finding the child in you and trying to hold onto that while you grow up," said its stage director, Rob Ashford, confidently.

This "Peter Pan" is housed on a huge Long Island soundstage that last year

was transformed into pre-World War II Austria.

"'The Sound of Music' was more straightforward: One room, then another room, then another," said live TV director Glenn Weiss. "We're trying to immerse the viewer into this show. Cameras will be inside the scenes. There may even be a camera capturing a flying point of view."

While Peter gets to fly, Captain Hook will have ample chance to demonstrate he's light on his feet.

Tap dancing in boots? "I asked them to make my clothing as light as possible," said Christopher Walken, "'cause there's a lot of stuff to wear: a wig and a hat and swords and muskets!"

A show business veteran at 71, Walken isn't typically thought of as a song-and-dance man, despite his memorable hoofing in "Pennies From Heaven." But however much identified with serious drama (his breakout, Oscar-winning role was in the chilling 1978 film "The Deer Hunter"), he is anything but dismissive of musicals — neither as an actor nor as an audience member.

"Musicals are my favorite!" he declared. "If somebody says, 'I'm taking you to the theater,' I say, 'OK. Just make sure it's a musical.' I have deep respect for musicals — and for this one in particular."

"'Peter Pan' just appeals to something in a kid's imagination," said Allison Williams — "a boy flies through your window and everything's different forever."

"And if you revisit 'Peter Pan' periodically as you grow up, it means different things every time you see it. □



In this Friday, April 26, 2013 photo, actor Alan Alda listens during an interview at Stony Brook University, on New York's Long Island. **Associated Press**

Actor challenges scientists: Explain sleep to kids

MINEOLA, N.Y. (AP) — Actor-turned-part-time professor Alan Alda has a new challenge for scientists: Explain sleep to an 11-year-old. The TV and film star best known for his role in the 1970s sitcom "M.A.S.H." has had a lifelong interest in science. The New York native teaches at the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science at Stony Brook University on Long Island. He started the annual

"Flame Challenge" contest in 2011. It asks scientists to explain complex concepts in ways a child can understand. The first year sought an answer to "What is a flame?" That was followed by challenges to explain time and color. Scientists have until Feb. 13 to submit their answers about sleep in writing, video or graphics. The winning written and video or graphic entries will receive \$1,000 cash prizes. □



In this April 9, 2014 file photo, actor Tracy Morgan attends the FX Networks Upfront premiere screening of "Fargo" at the SVA Theater in New York. **Associated Press**

Wal-Mart denies stalling in Tracy Morgan lawsuit

DAVID PORTER Associated Press NEWARK, New Jersey (AP) — Wal-Mart on Tuesday denied claims by lawyers for actor-comedian Tracy Morgan that the giant retailer is stalling a federal lawsuit over a fatal highway crash in New Jersey last summer. In a court filing Monday, attorneys for Morgan opposed a motion by Wal-Mart driver Kevin Roper to intervene in the case. Roper isn't named as a defendant but is facing criminal

charges in New Jersey. He is seeking to have the lawsuit delayed pending the resolution of his criminal case. Morgan, a former "Saturday Night Live" and "30 Rock" star, was returning from a performance in Delaware in June when the Wal-Mart truck driven by Roper slammed into the back of his limo van. Fellow comedian James McNair was killed, and Morgan and two others were seriously injured. Morgan's attorneys ac-

cused Wal-Mart of stalling to avoid the disclosure of its safety practices. The Arkansas-based Wal-Mart filed a letter with the court Tuesday that denied the accusation and said the company has taken no position on Roper's motion. "Plaintiffs' accusation that Wal-Mart is somehow behind Mr. Roper's motion in an attempt to delay discovery is simply false," the company's attorneys wrote. Last month, the federal judge overseeing the case set the next in-person settlement conference for early March and scheduled deadlines extending to November of 2015 for both sides to file motions. After a status conference with attorneys for both sides last month, Morgan's attorney, Benedict Morelli, said Morgan is fighting to recover from a traumatic brain injury suffered in the crash and is uncertain if he will be "the Tracy Morgan he once was." A preliminary investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board said Roper was driving 65 mph (100 kph) in the 60 seconds before he slammed into the van. The speed limit on that stretch of the New Jersey Turnpike is 55 mph (88 kph) and was lowered to 45 mph (72 kph) that night because of construction. □

Scarlett Johansson weds in secret U.S. ceremony

PHILIPSBURG, Montana (AP) — Scarlett Johansson and longtime partner Romain Dauriac were secretly married this autumn in the northwestern state of Montana. Johansson and Dauriac, a French former journalist, had been engaged since September 2013. They welcomed a daughter, Rose, in September. The couple wed in the small, scenic town of Philipsburg, Granite

County Clerk of Court Carol Bohrsen said Tuesday. "It's a beautiful little spot," Bohrsen said. Bohrsen said the couple went to the Granite County Courthouse themselves to get a license. The document, later filed with the county, shows the wedding took place Oct. 1. "They were nice people," she said of the couple. "I thought Scarlett was very personable. A very sweet personality."

It wasn't known exactly where the nuptials were held, though Philipsburg is home to The Ranch at Rock Creek, which bills itself as a luxury ranch resort. Last year, Bohrsen issued a wedding license to actress Kate Bosworth and film director Michael Polish. They wed at The Ranch at Rock Creek. Johansson previously was married to Canadian actor Ryan Reynolds. Her recent acting credits include "Lucy," "Chef,"



Scarlett Johansson arrives at The Independent Film Project's 24th Annual Gotham Independent Film Awards at Cipriani Wall Street on Monday, Dec. 1, 2014, in New York.

Associated Press and "Captain America: The Winter Soldier." □

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